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THE ALLIANCE TAKES SHAPE

MR. CHURCHILL and Lord Beaverbrook in Washington and Ottawa; the loudest cheers in Congress and the Canadian Parliament reserved for Soviet and Chinese victories. Mr. Eden and General Nye, Britain's Chief Supply Officer, in Moscow; a cordial if vaguely phrased agreement, which means military collaboration even if it slurs over more long-distance divergencies between Soviet Russia and the Western Democracies. General Wavell and General Brett, representing Britain and the United States, simultaneously in China, and Chinese military officials in Moscow. A military conference of the chief Powers concerned at Singapore. Here, in response to Japan's heavy blows, is at least the outline of that Grand Alliance which if formed before the war might at least have postponed it, and if operated as the collective system promised us after the last war, might have prevented it. As it is, we must be grateful for an *ad hoc* military alliance, and note the implications of Mr. Churchill's brilliantly phrased appeal to the United States not to repeat her previous error and retire into an isolation which has proved once more to be unreal. "Five or six years ago," said the British Prime Minister, "it would have been easy, without shedding a drop of blood, for the United States and Great Britain to have insisted on the fulfilment of the disarmament clauses of the treaties which Germany signed after the Great War; and that also would have been the opportunity for assuring to the Germans those raw materials which we declared in the Atlantic Charter should not be denied to any nation, victor or vanquished." How far Mr. Churchill appreciates the economic and sociological significance of these phrases we are not sure. They seem to imply that it would have been possible for Germany to have free access to raw materials without access to the raw materials from which weapons are made. The truth which Britain and America will have to face if they mean not to repeat the error which Mr. Churchill deplores, is that both would have to cease to be States in which capitalist organisations supplied all markets which could pay them. Mr. Churchill would have been nearer the mark if he had said that British and American business had for reasons of their own profit rearmed Germany, and that unless we could build a supernational State which alone would have the right to arm, the same process would be repeated. With this sentiment Stalin would certainly agree. Which raises the somewhat difficult problem of what supernational authority is to prevent the potential aggressor of the future having that access to raw materials which Mr. Churchill both desires to promise and to withhold.

The Grand Alliance, whatever its underlying strains and stresses, is a reality for the purposes of waging war against the Axis. But Britain, Russia, the United States and China are not the only Powers involved. Mr. Curtin's statement is sufficient reminder of the importance of a fuller association of new Powers which no longer think in terms of an empire centred in London. Mr. Curtin's highly "realistic" remarks about looking to America "free from any pangs about our traditional links of friendship to Britain" came as a shock to most British people; those few, who are students of empire rather than imperialists, know that many Australians have for a generation been talking in terms of a possible American rather than a British orientation. To-day, when Britain and America are in alliance, Mr. Curtin appears to be raising a point of irritation rather than of substance; he is expressing the anger generally felt in Australia at the lack of preparation in the Pacific and in particular at the astonishing behaviour of the authorities in Malay and Singapore during the last twelve months. Much more startling reports of the slackness and incompetence of the authorities—which cannot be brushed aside by a talk of shortage of materials or weapons—have reached Australia and the United States than this country. It would be possible to retort by asking whether Australia has herself been any more prescient about the results of appeasing Japan in the Pacific. But the immediate reply must be to associate Australia and the other Dominions more closely than hitherto with the central direction of Allied strategy.

Mr. Churchill did well to warn listeners on the Atlantic Continent that more serious blows are still to be struck at the position of Britain and America in the Pacific. The Philippines, as United States strategy has for many years recognised, cannot be successfully defended. Singapore and the entire congeries of immensely valuable islands that stretch from Burma to Australia are now in grave danger from the Japanese. Clearly the danger of Allied strategy is too much to disperse its resources in attempts to defend the indefensible. It may prove that the key to essential defence against the Axis in the Pacific is now in Burma rather than in Malaya.

Meanwhile the Alliance has one solid source of comfort. Stalin's armies make steady, if not very rapid, progress against the Germans throughout the enormous front along which Hitler had advanced. The Russians have recaptured Kerch, which was taken by the Germans not so many weeks ago and described by them as the gates to the Caucasus and its oil. Its recapture by the Russians means that we may hope to see the Germans in the Crimea cut off. We must not expect too much of the Russians, who fight in this war without the aid of an Allied army in Western Europe. But the Russian steam-roller, which, according to reports in the last war, was to roll to the Baltic, and which, in fact, rolled back into Siberia, is on this occasion pressing steadily forward; and we may ask (in a spirit of enquiry and with no more than that sober confidence which Mr. Churchill recommends) where exactly are those winter quarters which the Germans are still promising their tired and frozen army?

Home Notes (*by an Industrial Correspondent*)

The events of the past few weeks have made "reconstruction" appear at once a more distant and a more insoluble problem than ever. In face of the poor showing of ourselves and the Americans in the Far East, and of the continued good showing of the Russians on the East European front, it seems less realistic than ever to read of projects of post-war reconstruction in which it is plainly assumed that the capitalist system is to continue in the main unchanged. To be sure, nearly all the planners assume a considerable increase in the amount of State control both over foreign trade and over home industry; but it seems to be taken for granted that the capitalists and workers over whom this control is to be exercised will remain in much the same relative positions as before the war. Indeed, official plans are bound to be based on this assumption, which is also implicit in the form of recognition accorded for war purposes to the Trade Unions and the employers' associations. Since the Joint Consultative Committee representing the Trades Union Congress, the Federation of British Industries, and the Employers' National Confederation was set up early in the war, the same principle of equal representation of workers and employers on advisory bodies has been followed in one instance after another. It is the industrial equivalent of Coalition Government and of the political truce.

* * *

This may be the only sensible way of waging the war; but when it comes to making plans for the post-war period, it is bound to lead to paralysis. For it means in effect that all awkward issues on which Capital and Labour cannot reach agreement have to be burked. It means that no one is in a position to consider officially whether such and such industries ought to be acquired by the public, or whether there is to be a drastic redistribution of incomes, or whether the class system in education is to be brought to an end—or, indeed, whether any major change is to be made in class structure and social relations. It is, of course, possible that Mr. Greenwood's little department is secretly debating some of these larger issues. But I doubt it; and I feel quite sure Mr. Greenwood is not proposing to bring any of them forward and ask the Government to clinch its policy. What, indeed, would be the use? Obviously, the members of the War Cabinet would disagree violently, and the only decision would be the decision that it is inexpedient to decide. This paralysis of judgment on major issues is unavoidable as matters stand; and it will continue under a Government like-minded in nothing except a will to win the war.

* * *

The Socialists, for their part, do not seem to be much further advanced with their unofficial planning. I hear rumours of strong disagreements on the Committees set up by the Labour Party to consider post-war policy—disagreements not so much about what the policy is to be as about the expediency to saying anything committal just now, for fear of embarrassing the Labour Ministers. If that fear is to prevail, clearly the Socialists—or at any rate the Labour Party—must be precluded from making any plans at all until the war is over. For the Labour Party cannot plan in secret; and would not, even if it could. Its leaders and its rank-and-file have both a strong tradition of completely open diplomacy. But, here again, the consequence is likely to be an entire absence of considered plans and a sheer necessity of acting quickly without any when the moment arrives—or of paying the extreme penalty for not acting quickly enough.

Rubber Control

John Parker has been asking questions in the House on the rubber position. He asked why only 7 per cent. of crude rubber manufactured in this country is reclaimed, whereas 38 per cent. of used rubber is re-utilised in the United States. He pointed out that rubber waste was actually being sent across the Atlantic to be reclaimed and brought back again. He also elicited the information that the personnel of the Rubber Control is composed of people who in peacetime are in the trade. Here is the familiar question. How can directors of companies, even in war, altogether forget the prospects of business in peace? Similarly, reclamation is in the hands of associated firms. This industry, it would appear, is linked with the plantation interests. The plantations have naturally been concerned to increase the consumption of crude rubber, and consequently to restrict reclaiming used rubber. Lord Beaverbrook has prohibited the manufacture of numbers of rubber articles, such as toy balloons, and placed the manufacture of others, such as hot-water bottles and golf balls, under licence. The manufacture of civilian motor tyres is also forbidden. Parliament will have to go into the whole question of the Rubber Control.

WAR REACHES INDIA

THE bombings of Rangoon last week brought the Pacific war almost to the frontiers of India, where the realism of neutrality was already questioned by many of those leaders who have played a prominent part in the struggle for independence. It is a mistake to believe that Nehru and others who have been released from prison are unaffected by the new situation in the Pacific. While reiterating their criticisms of British policy towards the Congress demand for freedom, they have spoken of the necessity of victory over the Axis. Mr. Gandhi in his statement resigning his leadership of Congress, expressed surprise at the large measure of support shown at the meeting of the working Committee for a restatement of policy. Summaries of this restatement have now been published. Firm in its denunciation of British Imperialism, Congress now states that its sympathies lie wholly with the victims of Fascist aggression. The war, now close to India, is recognised as the dominant consideration, and the acceptance of Mr. Gandhi's resignation means that "non-violence" becomes the policy of only a small group. A meeting of the All-India Congress Committee fixed for January 15th, will review the political situation and ratify and endorse whatever decision the Working Committee may take during its present session.

The Muslims are similarly ready to recognise the existence of a new situation. The Working Committee of the Muslim League at its meeting in Nagpur, has adopted a resolution declaring that "the entry of Japan into the war on the side of the Axis Powers has brought danger much closer to India and forced into greater prominence the question of the defence of India." The Resolution then goes on to express the Committee's willingness "to shoulder the burden of the defence of the country alone or in co-operation with other Parties on the basis that a real share of the responsibility is given in the Government at the centre and in the Provinces within the framework of the present constitution—but without prejudice to the major political issues involved in framing the future constitution." Another clause adds detail and emphasis to this condition. It asserts that any "revision of policy or any fresh declaration which adversely affects" the Muslim demands for Pakistan "or proceeds on the basis of a central government with India as one single unit and the Mussulmans as an All-India minority will be strongly resented by Muslims, who will be compelled to resist it with all the force at their command, which would, at this critical juncture, among other things, necessarily result in serious impediment to the country's war efforts."

In the past week the Liberal Federation of India also met in Madras. Two resolutions were passed, one protesting against the suggestion that India is excluded from the scope of the Atlantic Charter, and the other asking for the mobilisation of the resources of the country, both in men and material to "protect the lives of India's teeming millions from the imminent danger which is threatening them." At the same time, it urged that the necessary war effort is not possible unless a favourable psychological atmosphere is created by a change in the policy of the British Government towards India. Two important proposals are outlined; the reconstruction of the Central Government with entirely non-official Indians holding all portfolios—including finance and defence—with full control and direction of policy on a basis of joint responsibility, and an immediate declaration by the British Government that India will enjoy a position of equality as regards both status and functions with England and the Dominions within a period not exceeding two years after the conclusion of the war.

These three meetings show that the war has at last reached the mind of India. Its impact on Congress and the retirement of Mr. Gandhi are events of the greatest interest and significance. Confronted with the actual danger of invasion, the philosophy of non-violence now only appeals to comparatively few. Pacificism again becomes a religion rather than a political weapon. There will be no personal split between Gandhi and his principal followers; that is not in the nature of Indian politics. But the majority of the principal parties are now clearly anxious to co-operate in defeating the Axis. Does this not afford the British Government a new opportunity? Indian co-operation, though excellent in quality, as the records of the Indian regiments in Africa show, still remains comparatively small in quantity. It may become nation-wide. We hope that Mr. Churchill and Mr. Amery will not once again let the opportunity slip by, content to plead the still unresolved conflict between Hindus and Muslims. Neither Congress nor the Muslim League can resolve the deadlock, as the Muslim resolution shows. Neither can Britain. But on certain conditions it seems possible that the problem may be put aside for the duration of the war, with some hope of a solution emerging out of the practical experience of co-operation. If the Liberal suggestion of a definite promise of full independence two years after the war is accepted; if India is guaranteed full participation at the Peace Conference; if on that basis an All-India National Government is set up of a character to command the loyalty of the principal parties of India—then the British Government might find that a renewed appeal to India to co-operate fully in winning the war would meet with a nation-wide response. But the next move is with the British Government.

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STRATEGY FOR 1942

[FROM A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT]

You have accounted yourselves happy in being environed with a great ditch from all the world beside. Truly you will not be able to keep your ditch, nor your shipping, unless you turn your ships and shipping into troops of horse and companies of foot and fight to defend yourselves on *terra firma.—Oliver Cromwell : Address to Parliament, 25th January*, 1658.

In Washington during the last week of 1941 President and Premier have tried to organise as a single struggle the complicated war that straddles three continents. The procedure by which they propose to co-operate with Russian statesmen and soldiers has been disclosed : with Mr. Eden's return from Moscow simultaneously military conversations have been in progress in Chungking. But, as Mr. Churchill himself pointed out, the suggestion of a single executive command is impossible. No one man could take on himself the responsibility of directing from a single headquarters the many campaigns waged : here on the frozen steppes, there over blazing deserts and elsewhere amid the maze of the Pacific lands, by forces that differ in race, tradition and armament as widely as do the armies of our Grand Alliance. Such unity of command as we can attain will have to be limited to certain big regions. The entire Pacific area is one of these, the Atlantic another : the Mediterranean, with its possible extensions toward Spain in the west and Turkey in the east, may be a third. But if there can be no single command it is none the less imperative that a Joint General Staff, representing the Russians, Chinese and Dutch as adequately as the English-speaking Powers, should work out a long-range plan for victory, and modify it, as the months go by, to meet the enemy's moves. Some time-table, however elastic, it must draw up, which will show the approximate dates during the next two years when new American and British armies will be ready for the fresh enterprises overseas, when ships now laid down will join the fleets, and the rate of expansion of the various air forces. Only when such a plan exists will it be possible to adjust on a long view of the common good the competing claims of all the combatants and each of the campaigns for tanks, guns and planes.

Two enemies confront us, who can do little to help one another directly. The first question of principle that faces the Allies is whether they have the strength at present to engage both these enemies in a decisive grapple—to fight two major wars simultaneously, as if each were of equal importance ? Or would it be wiser to concentrate the aggressive forces of the entire Alliance in an effort to destroy the Nazi war-machine as quickly as possible, while conducting a limited defensive struggle against the Japanese ? Tokio would not long be in a position to hold out once the Allied navies were freed and the armies of Chiang Kai-shek properly equipped. The case for taking our enemies singly is obvious enough. Until a great American army is trained, and until American industry is geared to its maximum production for defence, our joint resources, British, Russian and American, are barely sufficient to cope with the Nazis. If we assign any big proportion of them to the Far East during 1942 we may fail to achieve any notable success in either field and may open the gravest risks in both. The difficulty in concentrating on Europe is that it may seem callous about the danger of Australia, whose northern areas may in any case become vulnerable to Japanese attack, and that it demands from the Americans very considerable self-restraint and patience. For a year or so we should do little to help them in the field that concerns them most nearly, while we should expect them to keep on sending arms and supplies to Russia and the Mediterranean.

Let us assume that this politically difficult but strategically sound course can be followed. What then ? Taking the Far East first, we expect further Japanese successes. We have our negative answer to the delicate question whether Russia should now enter the Far Eastern war. On the contrary, we should ask her to conserve all her strength to smash the Germans. One means we could adopt to worry and distract the Japanese. The Chinese cannot help us in Europe : let us, as far as possible, equip and reinforce them so that they compel the Japanese to employ in the interior of China the forces they are eager to dispatch to the Dutch islands and, it may be, to Burma and Australia also. We start from the belief that these Chinese armies are by now as experienced as they are brave and enduring. But they lack not merely guns, planes and tanks but gunners, pilots and tank crews. The obvious course is to send them the arms and the technical troops they lack, from America and possibly from India. It follows that Rangoon and the Burma Road must be held at all costs. It is also conceivable that somewhat later, if the American battle fleet can act as convoy a small American expedition composed of these technical troops might with Chinese help land somewhere on the southern coast of China, which is very weakly held. So soon as a Sino-American army began to sweep down the Yangtse Valley the Japanese would have to stop their easy conquests elsewhere. The time for a Russian intervention in the Far East would come in the last phases of the war, after Germany's strength had been broken.

To that main problem let us now address ourselves. What has happened in Russia has confirmed us in our original belief that the key to victory is to open, at the right moment and in the right place, that " second front in continental Europe " for which Stalin has publicly called. Sea-power and air-power are mighty weapons, but we have never believed that they can alone suffice to destroy an enemy who holds the great land-mass of continental Europe. What the greatest military genius our nation ever produced said in 1658 is equally true to-day. Faced with a hostile power and an intolerant idea that threaten to master Europe (his fear was that the Christian world would be all Popery), our " ditch " will not suffice to protect our liberties ; we must " fight on *terra firma*." It will not do to discuss Cromwell as a biased cavalry general : he knew all about sea-power, and built up under Blake a fleet as constantly victorious at sea as was his own New Model on land. The " ditch," moreover, was much more nearly an adequate protection in his day than it is in ours. Those who rely on aerial bombardment to deliver the knock-out blow have been slow to profit by experience. The Germans had numerical superiority in the air over us in 1940, and over the Russians in 1941. In neither case did it bring them victory. Why then should we rely upon it, when we in turn shall be the stronger in the air ? The Germans had two advantages which we shall not possess : they had bases for their fighters within easy range of their target : this target, again, was a compact and overcrowded island, while ours would not be merely the much bigger area of the Reich, but a great part of occupied Europe also. Finally, as the war goes on, the defence against bombardment has on both sides steadily overtaken the attack. One evil consequence of this popular exaggeration of the use of air-power for the bombardment of cities and industrial objectives is that it has diverted us from paying due attention to its operational use both on land and at sea. All warfare is now three-dimensional.

On a sober reckoning we may assume that the Russians are now strong enough to keep up a steady pressure on the Germans until the snows melt, and probably to drive them a good deal further back than they had intended to retire. The ideal plan, if it were feasible, would then be to develop our offensive from the North African front or open elsewhere a second front to such effect that the Russians will be able to retain the initiative in the spring. This is not easy, since Anglo-American industrial resources and shipping will have to be divided between the Russians and our own forces on this hypothetical second front, while something (but not too much) must be allowed for the Far East. Mr. Churchill has checked any too sanguine anticipations by seeming to postpone any initiative on a great scale until 1943. But if Rommel can be crushed in Libya, ought not that success to free us to push on into other territory which Hitler must defend ? The Germans may, however, spare us the anxious task of deciding where to open this second front by opening one themselves. They may risk great losses in order to fling reinforcements by air and sea into Tripolitania ; they may compel Vichy to give them the use of Bizerta ; they may over-run Spain and all North Africa. It is also just conceivable that Hitler's " intuitions " may tempt him to invade us.

If, on the other hand, the choice of the second front should lie with us, four considerations may be borne in mind : (1) As far as possible the chosen scene should admit of amphibian operations, and should start therefore in an island or peninsula. (2) To economise shipping it should not be too far from our own ports. (3) The population should be not merely friendly, but disposed to aid us actively by guerilla warfare, by strikes, and eventually by falling in behind our storm troops to hold the ground won. (4) If we can at first risk only a force of moderate strength the chosen field should be one which it might hold as a " Tobruk," and afterwards use for a further advance. The striking force must be formidable rather in its mechanical equipment than in mere numbers ; the German army that rushed through the Sedan gap and knocked France out consisted of less than 300,000 men. So far from asking for further conscription for the army, we incline to think that too many skilled men have been taken from industry already. We should also be able to rely, as we advance, on many trained soldiers among the liberated populations. Some American reinforcement may also be available, hardly by spring, but possibly by autumn.

If, then, it is decided to concentrate on Europe and up to a point to neglect the Far East, the Allied Council may, by keeping part of the German army seriously engaged elsewhere, enable the Russians to continue their forward movement in Spring. We should feel more confidence in an early attempt at the offensive if Mr. Churchill could be persuaded of the value of political warfare. It is not, as his speech to the Canadian Parliament seemed to assume, an alternative to " external " hammering. But while we rained our blows from East and West simultaneously on the Nazi war-machine, we would also sap the will of the German masses to die in the last ditch, by assuring them in plain and concrete words of a future in which they can co-operate when the rule of the Nazi and machinery of the German army are destroyed.

A LONDON DIARY

On New Year's Eve I listened to the 11.0 European News, as usual so much more effective than the B.B.C. home bulletins. The brief New Year's greetings from soldiers in many languages I thought more moving than the longer ABCD and U.S.S.R. programme that followed. But that, too, was exciting; there was a real feeling of unity and a sense of common purpose, at least in war, from the idealism of Mr. Winant with which it started, and the messages from Chinese in Singapore down to the Soviet spokesman who had the last word. But what a purpose and how much of this unity can survive the war? Strange animals, we are a gregarious species that only bunches in face of a common enemy and that splits up into fragments again when the immediate danger is past. I return to my old solution; the discovery of a ruthless enemy in Mars. Then we should all be peaceful allies, socialists uniting to defend our world. Or would the Japs be a Fifth Column?

* * *

A few days ago the European News Service had an absolutely first-class talk in German about Hitler's Russian campaign. Here were all the quotations from Hitler and from Goebbels and his gang, promising speedy victory, the date when Russian resistance would be overcome and all the rest of it. Side by side were the bleak facts, the excuses, and finally an admission of failure. The story was told with an admirably dramatic power, the best devices being employed to bring home the enormous German casualties and the sufferings that the Germans had inflicted and were undergoing. I am far from wanting to suggest that a purely propagandist talk of this type is suitable for the British public. But it does seem to me odd that the European Service should be so much better at giving us the benefit of such facts and contrasts, which should be as encouraging to us as they should be discouraging to German listeners.

* * *

One of the few overwhelming broadcasting successes has been the *Any Questions* feature, which has put Prof. Joad so extensively on the map. I see that a new version of this feature is now to begin in the New Year on the Forces programme. Vernon Bartlett and others are to be put up to answer Forces questions on current affairs. Current affairs have been largely absent from the Brains Trust discussions, which have concentrated to an extraordinary extent on popular science and philosophy. I believe myself that if sensible, independent people are chosen to give answers this may be one of the most successful features. The answers in this new feature will not of course be impromptu. I am often asked whether the answers of the Brains Trust are really impromptu. I can assure people that they are, but I must add that there has recently been a considerable modification in technique. A short prepared talk, is included in the feature, and questions are obviously arranged to suit guests. I could mention a distinguished guest of the Brains Trust who once sat through an entire session without opening his mouth; no questions on political, social or historic subjects were asked. In those days, too, there was much more competition for the opportunity of answering. Prof. Joad was usually first. To-day the questions are arranged so that guests get a fair chance. I cannot believe it was accident that, when Margery Fry (an outstanding success) sat on the Brains Trust, questions were asked about Penal Reform and other matters on which she is an expert. Nor was it a coincidence that St. John Ervine found conveniently questions about the nature of the drama, while doubts were thrown on the whole spontaneity of the Brains Trust when Fougasse delivered an excellent reply about caricature, only to be reminded by one of his colleagues of another remark he had made in discussing this subject at lunch-time.

* * *

Surely the American note to Canada asking what steps were to be taken to restore the *status quo* in the two little islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon is one of the oddest of documents. No one denies that these islands, French communication stations, might be useful to the enemy in the hands of the Vichy Government. Admiral Muselier, on his way back from Canada, decided to take them over for Free France. Instead of the congratulatory telegram that one might have expected, there comes this abrupt and threatening sign of displeasure from Washington. The official explanation is that General de Gaulle's forces have moved "out of turn"; they have acted without the authority of the American and British Governments. That such independent action would annoy the High Command, I can well understand. But I believe that a pro-Vichy, Catholic and reactionary tendency is also at work in the State Department at Washington even more powerfully than it has been in Whitehall. Is the Canadian army to go and arrest the garrison of General de Gaulle? I have little confidence in the politics of the leader of the Free French—democratic Frenchmen are uneasy in his organisation—but I should have expected to be accused of sheer malice against the "alliance of freedom-loving peoples" if I had ever suggested so resounding a slap in the face by one Ally to aother.

* * *

Has the Cairo spokesman moved out to Singapore and is the man who used to write about Hitler "extending his communications" in Norway, Greece, Crete, etc., still writing in the *Times*? That is all I can deduce from reading in Tuesday's Reuter despatch from Singapore that

> the British withdrawal from Ipoh is now merely in accordance with the prearranged plan to fall back gradually to more advantageous ground for defensive operations in view of the limited resources of men and material at present at our disposal.

while the *Times*' leader, commenting on this, points out that

> the further the enemy advances the greater will be his difficulties and the stronger the resistance which he encounters.

There was far more excuse for this kind of thing on the earlier occasions; for one thing experts had less experience and could be forgiven for assuming the possibility of speedily recapturing lost positions. Every informed person I have talked to about the Pacific agrees that our real duty is to warn the British public that it is highly improbable that anything can be done to prevent the Japanese effectively occupying the Southern China seas, and rendering Singapore of little use even if they do not capture it outright. More shocking still we find the same leader writer (not, I think, the same writer whose article on Monday suggested that we ought to improve our democracy from the American and our economics from the Moscow example), saying that the defence of Hong Kong was justified .like the defence of Crete because it "gained precious time." This is the sort of nonsense that mocks the dead. Hong Kong could not be successfully defended, which is why some of us, on the basis of expert advice, began to urge that it should be evacuated several years ago. Of course, its defence has been heroic; as heroic and as useless as the Charge at Balaclava. It has gained no time since the operations were isolated from those in the Southern Pacific.

The peculiar contribution of J. B. Priestley to current thinking is his capacity for making fresh and vivid those concepts, in which we believe but which we are in danger of losing because they are usually enshrined in words that have become stale and trite. I think he has been remarkably successful in his last book, *Out of the People* (Heinemann and Collins, 2s. 6d.), in giving reality to the notion of democracy. His theme is that we have had a society of classes and that we are in danger of changing it to one of "masters and masses," whereas what we must have is a society of "people." He illustrates this conception with surprising ingenuity and vigour. He does not burke the property issue, which he recognises as the root of both the class and the Fascist concept of masters and masses. But in general his book is not an economic treatise, but the best kind of sermon, ending with some practical examples of the type of thing that he thinks genuine democrats—he mentions the 1941 Committee as a possible organ of achievement—should concentrate on doing. A practical sermon preached with eloquence, humour and common sense. I read it on Christmas Day and felt the better for it.

* * *

Our village schoolmistress, determined to keep up with the times, has been giving a series of lessons on the history of the U.S.A. With the Christmas exams came the howler season; I submit this for the prize:—

> Virginia was the place where England first got tobacco and potatoes from. It got its name from the Virgin Mary, who was ruling England at that time."
>
> CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

A 5/- prize for the first entry in this column goes to Mrs. L. M. Home.

Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

A decision is expected to be reached soon on the subject of the defence of aerodromes in this country. It is a matter which has caused considerable misgiving since the German attack on Crete.—Our Aeronautical Correspondent in the *Times*, Dec. 22nd.

New nude is in town. Dinora, who stands undraped in seven tableaux to represent the "plight of Poland," is now in *Glamour Serenade* (Prince of Wales).—*Evening Standard.*

Collection of oratorios, part-songs (duplicates) glees. Exchange for apples, onions.—Advt. in the *Lady*.

Gentleman (56), with lifetime clerical experience and special knowledge of commercial astrology, desires secretarial post.—*Times.*

"Clean, upright and safe-for-the-children words" is the new B.B.C. motto for all popular songs. They are making producers find new rhymes for old tunes.

The B.B.C. "High Command" can see a double meaning where others can't.

Take Geraldo's ditty, "Why Don't We Do This More Often?"

Jackie Hunter and Dorothy Carless used to sing "Why don't we do this more often, just as we're doing *to-night*?"

The B.B.C. version for broadcasting now runs "Why don't we do this more often, just as we're doing TO-DAY?"—*Daily Mirror.*

GENERAL HITLER

the interval since Hitler took over direct mmand of the German Army there have ystallised in Britain two main "explanations" the event. One is that it means a victory for Nazi Party over the non-Nazi Generals—or, ther, that the Generals having suffered a cial blow in the field, have in consequence d to conduct a political retreat, too. The other popularised by the *Sunday Times* leader-writer, ose style is so like that of Lord Vansittart—that, on the contrary, the Generals have got itler into a trap: if there are victories anywhere w, the prestige of the Army, and hence the wer of the Generals, will be increased, and there is a further series of defeats Hitler will the one to carry the baby, while the Generals erge as honest fellows with whom fools might persuaded to conclude a favourable peace.

Necessarily, both these theories are highly eculative. If we list the known facts, we get the llowing: (1) The Red Army has inflicted the German Army the first major defeat it has ffered in this war. (2) The forced decision pass from the offensive to the defensive was big and fateful as that of September 15th, 1914, hen Falkenhayn and Tappen, after the defeat the Marne, formally abandoned mobile war-re and resolved to stand upon the defensive. decision considered by many German military thorities to have been the real turning-point the war. Field-Marshal Haeseler and General oener were among those who from that moment considered that a negotiated "peace without tory" was the only hope for Germany.) The crisis produced by the defeat in Russia a political as well as a military crisis. The icial proclamation of Brauchitsch's dismissal ecifically referred to the interweaving of ilitary and political considerations as a reason Hitler's action. (4) The crisis is a crisis the regime, in the sense that the head of the gime is directly involved. It was after all ssible to sack the Commander of the American cific Fleet without having President Roosevelt Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces—te over direct command of the Navy. (5) This rticular sort of crisis between the political dership and the High Command is peculiar Germany, has been sometimes dormant and metimes acute in the German imperial system nce long before the particular problems of the lationship between the Nazi Party and the Army ose, and has often been publicly acknowledged a principal factor in the German defeat in the t World War.

This last point seems to be indispensable to a ar understanding of the real gravity of the sis to-day.

In 1900 Field-Marshal von Schlieffen wrote: Finally, in Prussia, the problem of the leader-ip in the field found its solution. In 1866 the ng himself appeared at the head of the Army, ich was his own, created by him. Beside him od a statesman and a Chief of General Staff. triumvirate as leader in the field was successful 1866 and 1870, *but it need not always be ccessful.*" In 1921, Colonel Schwertfegar, a ncipal military expert witness at the Reichstag mmission enquiring into "The Causes of the rman Collapse," said: "We must acknowledge t in the world war the ideal solution of the ader problem—theoretically very well recog-ed here in Germany—was never accomplished. d that was Fate. The whole development events absolutely cried out for a vigorous lling together of the central power, a legal tatorship from above." In 1925 Professor dt, Reichstag Deputy, concluded a long analysis with the words: "The relationship of the Reich Government to the Army High Command was for Germany the real problem of the World War." In 1939 Herbert Rosinski, in his book on the German Army, said: "In the Leader-General of the Third Reich the German Army may well find the prophet who sends it to Armageddon." On December 21st, 1941, the proclamation issued in Berlin declared: "The realisation of an inward call, and his own will to take upon himself responsibility, weighed with the statesman Adolf Hitler when he resolved to be his own Generalissimo."

The problem has existed, and has been acknowledged to exist, in Germany, ever since Bismarck, with 50,000 men standing ready to march on Berlin, smashed the liberal democrats of the Prussian Landtag (struggling to defend the "principle" of a "citizen army," which, unfortunately, hardly existed in fact), forced through the reorganisation of the Prussian Army, and in three victorious wars imposed a reactionary unity upon Germany. As Lenin wrote: "When revolutionary unity failed, Bismarck achieved it in a counter-revolutionary, Junker fashion." German unity has usually been preserved in an anti-democratic, reactionary, counter-revolutionary fashion. It has been preserved, ultimately, by the Army.

Temporarily solved by Schlieffen's "triumvirate," the resulting critical relationship between political leadership and Army Command lay dormant until 1916. But the younger Moltke himself recognised long before the first world war that "unity of action between the political and military leadership" were disastrously lacking.

Under the blows and stresses of the first world war the crisis exploded with a bang in 1917, when Ludendorff, virtually military dictator of Germany, overthrew Bethmann-Hollweg. And it reached its climax at the end of 1918 when Ludendorff first forced the Government to sue for an armistice, and then declared that the Army had been let down and was prepared to go on with the war.

When Hitler in February, 1938, "personally assumed the commanding power over the whole armed forces," he was attempting to solve the problem by assuming a position analogous to that which the Kaiser had held but failed to exploit in the first World War. It was an act of attempted "unification" parallel to the Gleichschaltung of the State Governments and the concentration of monopolist financial and industrial power. It was another step in the imposition of unity by the blackest forces of reaction—unity in a counter-revolutionary, banker fashion.

And yet it did not solve the problem. If it had there would have been no need for Hitler to assume in addition the direct Command of the Army. The flaws and cracks in the reactionary German system were sought out and set gaping in 1917 by failure to progress on the crucial western front, and by the growing revolt of the German people against the war and against the regime. (It was only Hindenburg's unwillingness which prevented Ludendorff and Colonel Bauer making a military putsch and establishing an open military dictatorship in 1917, for the purpose of "dealing with" the Left "oppositional" forces in the Reichstag, the Trades Unions and the factories.)

The crisis of 1941 is at least as grave as that of 1917. It is the crisis of a reactionary regime faced by defeat on the front and falling morale at home. New military blows from all sides, more intensive propaganda of the type that so terrified Ludendorff, are the means by which it can be exploited.

CHARLES TAIN

THE ART OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

It is unlikely that anyone will deny the importance of good relations between the public and the Departments of State. The modern civil service reaches so deeply into the lives of us all that the need of the official who will keep those relations smooth, who can explain policy and adjust misunderstandings, is an essential one. The modern Minister is a hard-worked person, attacked and attackable on a score of different fronts. To safeguard his position in the shifting context of his effort is an inherent need of the function he performs.

But it is growing even more clear that the task of those who are charged with watching the public relations of a government department assumes very different proportions from what it was in its modest beginnings. It is no longer a simple matter of a letter to the press correcting some misunderstanding, or an effort to make clear to the public the purpose of some complicated policy. The new type of public relations officer has gone to school to the advertising industry, and his Department, even more, his Minister, is the commodity he has to sell to the public. He wants to build up his chief's reputation. He seeks to "put him over" to the public very much as though he was a bar of soap or a packet of tea. The day is lost when he cannot get some favourable mention of his activities in the press, on the air, or on the films. He wants to make him talked of, very much as though the Minister was a film star, the army of whose fans is in need of constant stimulus. Where the Minister goes, a small army of publicity specialists must accompany him; photographs must be available, anecdotes retailed, the "peak" period for a broadcast somehow secured. His triumph is the association of some widespread slogan with the Minister's name. His success is measured by the intoxicating half-hour with his Minister in the morning, when they solemnly go through the press-cuttings of the day before, and think out new fields they may hope to conquer.

Nor does the technique stop there. Direct promotion is one thing. But, hardly less important, is the need to maintain the indirect contacts which are the safeguards of the central aim. Titbits of news may be reserved for "reliable" press-men; the critical may be excluded from their possession. An article may be stimulated here into the birth; there a broadcast may be organised which has the proper appearance of a "spontaneous" tribute. A properly timed dinner may do much; and a small but *intime* press conference, suitably garnished with sherry, has been known to accomplish wonders. The modern press officer knows all the special correspondents, mostly by their first names. He is aware that nothing is more flattering to human vanity than the prior possession of a secret still denied to the man in the street. From it may often flow the ideal result of the instruction that the Minister must be fully reported, in the background, too, of a favourable "leader," instead of being relegated to a couple of inches on the back page.

The process does not stop there. There is the great piece of news which must be kept back that the Minister himself may have the triumph of its announcement. There is the complicated voyage through dark by-paths to prevent the appearance of some angry attack of which the official has heard. There is the hint to be dropped to the B.B.C. that while, of course, the Minister would not dream of interfering with its discretion, he cannot help feeling that X is not quite the best person to give a talk on the particular theme. There

is the difficult Member of Parliament to whom the right word must be said at the right time. There is the visiting American journalist of eminence who must be sent home in the right mood. There is the book announced on the work of the Ministry; perhaps a tactful word will get him access to the proofs that he may see to it that the right "tone" prevails. Relations with the Ministry of Information must be kept in proper perspective; not least, he must be sure that its officials do not lose sight of his chief's claim to his full meed of attention. And behind all this, there is the vast, amorphous British public, so fickle in its loyalties, so unaccountable in its moods; a problem for him not seldom as great as that of a difficult Minister who has not really grasped the rules of this complex game.

Thackeray has somewhere described the real Louis XIV, the naked human being who dwells beneath the massive contributions of tailor and perruquier and silversmith. When the press officer has done with his political chief, he has constructed for him a public image almost as unrelated to the private person below as the Louis in full costume to his private persona. The problems raised by this new technique are grave. We know all too little of the real men by whom we are governed; rather do we make acquaintance with the lay figure the press officer has permitted us to observe. We know all too little of the real policies of the Minister; they come to us in a haze of doctrine, anecdote, slogan, affirmation, all coloured by the purpose of maximising the sales-value of the commodity upon whose distribution the Department has decided. Even Parliament examines them in a twilight atmosphere, as anyone can see who compares the facts in Viscount Gort's despatch with the three years of innuendo, suggestion, and half-truth which did duty for replies to questions on rearmament in the three critical years from 1936 to 1939.

When Mr. Duff Cooper was Minister of Information he fought, and lost, a stout fight to centralise all publicity in his Department. He lost because, by the time he arrived in Malet Street, the press officers in the different Ministries had already built up vested interests for the surrender of which no Minister was prepared. The Defence Services were appalled by the thought that laymen should have access to their secrets; the Foreign Office scoffed at the thought that the mind of Bloomsbury should pass judgment on the mysteries of Downing Street. The new Ministries, so largely staffed by business men to whom publicity technique was almost as important as the art of expense accounts, did not dream of yielding to a demand which might veil them in that obscure anonymity to which the ordinary civil servant is accustomed. So the trumpets continue to blare their messages from Whitehall and Adelphi, from the Embankment and Berkeley Square. One is tempted sometimes to wonder whether there are not Ministers who equate the views of their Press officers with the voice of public opinion, or whether the Ministry of Information has not, as its chief task, the function of maintaining for Ministers a careful separation between them. Certainly one of the most urgent tasks before modern democracy is to discover the way back from this innovation to the plane where uninfluenced tact is of itself respectable. The road may well be longer than most of us would like to imagine.

HAROLD J. LASKI

Chase your dead
PAPER

ON JEWELS

READING those excellent examples of modern prose, the advertisements in the newspapers, the other day, I paused at the following paragraph in the *Times*:

> ASPREYS will be glad to hear from any of their customers who wish to dispose of their old JEWELLERY and of GOLD and SILVERWARE. These items are in immense demand to-day, and prevailing PRICES are unprecedentedly HIGH. Representatives will, of course, call (where possible) whenever the quantity of goods offered is greater than can conveniently be sent by registered post.

Beneath this were other advertisements appealing for gold, jewellery, antique silver, etc. "Chests of silver, dinner plates, spoons and forks," said one of them, "are also purchased at special prices." "Many people to-day," said another, "possess valuable pieces of silver and plate put away in cupboards and boxes: these articles are wanted for EXPORT and a VERY HIGH PRICE can be realised if disposed of in the best market. Why not convert all surplus possessions into CASH and help the WAR effort? I need chests of silver, trays, candlesticks, soup tureens, teapots, coffee pots, entree dishes, dish covers, etc., etc."

How strange, I thought, as I read these words, that precious stones and precious metals should have become almost as valuable as waste paper! The day before yesterday they were superfluous luxuries—the appurtenances of rich barbarians. To-day, like old newspapers, old Christmas cards, and old wrapping paper, they have become aids to that curiously named thing, the war effort. Apparently you can help the war effort either by selling or by buying them. Jewellery is like mercy. It blesseth him that gives and him that takes.

I have never myself shared the savage passion for jewellery. I have for long been half in sympathy with Savonarola who persuaded the matrons and maids of Florence to throw their trinkets on to the Bonfire of Vanities. No jewel, it seems to me, had ever so lovely a name as the Bonfire of Vanities. This, indeed, was a jewel of the spirit—a sparkler out of reach, and even beyond the understanding, of a hotel thief. I sometimes wonder whether, if all the jewels on earth had been hurled into its noble flames, mankind would have suffered any loss of happiness. I have never possessed a jewel myself, unless a stone that is supposed to preserve me from drowning and that hangs on my watchchain—I think it is a cornelian—can be called a jewel. I wear it for use, not for beauty, cherishing it not as a diadem but for a rational purpose, and so far it has served me well.

There was a time, I admit, when I was in danger of being allured by gewgaws. When I was a small child, the colours of sapphires, rubies and emeralds seen in the rings on the hands of women were as enchanting to me as seas or sunsets. In the nursery age one can gaze and re-gaze at such things with a rapture that knows no law of diminishing return. Childhood, indeed, is the time of life at which it is possible to estimate jewellery at its true value. Then a sapphire fascinates the eye like the inside of a shell or a piece of broken delf on the shore. One loves it, not for its price, but for itself alone, as one loves yewberries. It is, so far as the child is concerned, part of the free show of the earth, not Bond Street merchandise.

Savages, too, it is said, have this simple appreciation of coloured stones. We hear of their parting with their best possessions even for worthless glass beads made in Birmingham. The human being's love of bright things goes back beyond the beginning of history. This is justifiable passion: but, unfortunately, when t human being becomes civilised, he or she cea to love bright things for their brightness a measures their value in terms of money. artificial diamond may be indistinguishable fr a real diamond, but there is not the same pri in wearing it. Women, we are told, do not mi wearing artificial jewellery if they have t genuine counterparts of the jewels in a safe the bank; but, if they possessed nothing b imitations, they would feel ill at ease amo their richer neighbours. This suggests th civilised women are in some respects inferior savages and children.

All this, no doubt, will be changed in Utop In Utopia the manufacture of artificial jewelle will be so perfected and so abundant that precio stones will be given away in lucky bags and w cease to have any value except the pleasure th give to the eye. Men, having grown ration will esteem the artificial stone as a work of and therefore preferable on the whole to t natural product. They will put artificial gems a level with stained glass, and no one, on seeing necklace of pearls, will any longer wonder: "A they real?" The real gems, indeed, will mere models or hints for the perfect sapphire ruby or emerald of the artificer.

This presupposes, of course, that the taste f jewels will survive even in Utopia. Probably will, and it may be that man is all the saner f preserving something of the spirit of the chi and of the savage. In any case he has so dee seated an inheritance of the veneration of precio stones and precious metals that his imaginati is unlikely to get rid of it this side of Doomsda Most of us were brought up to think of Heav as a place paved with gold; and in the *Revelati of St. John the Divine*, we see how the spiritu vision of the New Jerusalem inevitably becomes feast of jewellery:

> "And the foundations of the wall of the c were garnished with all manner of precious ston The first foundation was jasper; the secon sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, emerald;
>
> "The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; t seventh, chrysolyte; the eighth, beryl; the nin a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleven a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst.
>
> "And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; eve several gate was of one pearl: and the street of t city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass."

How charmingly the names of those jewe ring in the ear and all but come before the ey I confess I should not know most of the jewe named if I saw them: I should not recognise jasper, a chalcedony, a sardonyx, a sardius, chrysolyte, a beryl, a topaz, a chrysoprasus, a jacinth: yet the words enrich the imaginatio It is no wonder that poets used to write with suc emotion of beryl, chrysoberyl and chrysopras These words once moved me deeply even thoug I had not the slightest idea what any of the meant.

How insuppressible is the love of precio stones is shown by the fact that, though many them are reported to have brought ill luck their possessors, human beings continue to desi and to wear them. Consider, for example, t three Tsars who courted doom by wearing t "fatal emerald of Russia," presented to Peter I by the Empress Elizabeth Petrovna. "Aft wearing it," we are told, "Peter was assassinate Emperor Paul, who next wore it, was strangle Emperor Alexander II sought to remove t emerald's ill-repute by having it repolished a reset. But fate would accept no compromis and it fell from his finger after his assassination Novels and plays are full of stories as grueson

of the maleficence of jewels stolen from the heads of heathen idols. In fact it is rare to read of any one who prospered as a result of wearing jewellery. Even pearls are said to "mean tears"; and opals are dangerous to anybne not born in September. Poets have written of the curse of gold, but the curse that lies on jewellery seems to be equally malicious. Many a nearly honest man has been converted into a burglar by precious stones.

Perhaps, there is one special reason why, in spite of their bad name, jewels have retained their popularity. Few men know what to buy for a woman at Christmas or on a birthday or on other festive occasions; and, if they have money, jewellery solves the difficulty and, unlike flowers, fits easily into the pocket. For myself, I would prefer to give a woman a book token; but there are some women who do not care for book tokens yet whose eyes would light up at the sight of pearls or diamonds. Were it not so, there would be more bookshops and fewer jewellers in the West End of London. Whether this would be a mark of a better civilisation is a question that I must leave others to settle. All I can say is that I for one would rather own Boswell's *Johnson* than a tiara.

Y. Y.

IF IT HAPPENED HERE

(After Walter de la Mare)

"Scorched earth!" says Whitehall,
"Lay waste the land,
From Weep to Wassop
Let nothing stand.
Burn the hamlets
And fire the crops,
Grimes' Long Barn
And Turvey's hops."
Weep and Wassop
Put down their foot:
"Foes be landed,
But we stay put.
Weep folk reckon
Scorched earth may be
Right for Russians,
But not for we.
Tupman's meadow
Just under the plough,
'Twere plain foolish
To burn it now.
Wassop Manor
Be bolted and barred,
Squire baint trusting
They young Home Guard.
Parson says, if
His back was turned
Wouldn't wonder
If old church burned.
Weep's wormy timbers
Be quick to catch;
And who'd pay Snug
For his brand-new thatch?"
In Tudor tea-nook
Half-way to Weep,
Wassops' witches
Through curtains peep;
And Goody sits
In her locked-up shop
Bare of bull's-eye
And lollipop.
The guns are loud
And the church bells sound,
But Weep and Wassop
Will hold their ground.
The tanks are near
But in churchyard hole,
"Pish," says blindworm,
And "Tush," says mole.

SAGITTARIUS

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"Jack and Jill," at the Palace.
"Babes in the Wood," at the Stoll.
"Jack and the Beanstalk," at the Coliseum.
"Peter Pan," at the Adelphi.
"Little Women," at the Westminster.

London theatres have catered well for the children this year. Three excellent pantomimes are to be seen in the West End, as well as the old favourite *Peter Pan*. In the pantos, while we have topical jokes on gas masks, coupons and income-tax, there are also the old knockabout turns, juggling, burlesque and of course the spectacular transformation scenes, including flying ballets. Principal boys, though perhaps not so buxom, still make a good showing with their silk-clad legs; principal girls remain simpering, sweet and maidenly; and the producers have had their pick of the best comedians of the day. All the productions are well dressed and the decor is elaborate.

Jack and Jill is a pantomime built around those versatile stars Arthur Askey and Florence Desmond, who are ably assisted by "Monsewer" Eddie Gray, Bryan Michie (as the Dame) and Archie Glen. Eddie Gray's juggling, performed with such a nonchalant air, is amazing work. Arthur Askey remains Big-hearted Arthur throughout; his existence has little to do with the story, but it is through him that the play continues to be. Florence Desmond, as Jack, having reached the top of the hill, breaks away from the part to give some new impersonations of famous film stars. At the Stoll, Nervo and Knox, as the wicked robbers, work their acts in cleverly with the plot. Their slow-motion wrestling and balloon dance, as well as their slapstick performance of pudding making with pseudo-flour (we are assured on the programme that no real food is used) and water, prove the greatest fun. Leonard Henry as the Babes' governess is overflowing with new wisecracks, and full marks must go to Bonzo, played in the true Lupino tradition. Jean Colin in *Jack and the Beanstalk* has the best voice of all principal boys, Norman Evans is most like a pantomime dame, and Betty Jumel is the only soubrette in all three shows. This performance at the Coliseum is brightened by the excellent dancing of the John Tiller girls. Barbara Mullen brings to the part of Peter Pan the right mixture of magic and matter-of-fact; Alastair Sim has all the piratical arrogance of Captain Hook, and Russell Thorndike's Smee stands out among the minor parts. In *Little Women* the part of Marmee is played by Hilda Bayley with sympathy and understanding, and Barbara Douglas and Patrick MacNee will certainly fulfil most girls' ideas of Jo and Laurie. But why has the dramatist turned Prof. Bhaer into the Frenchman Antoine Baret? The characteristics of the liberal German, probably a refugee and one of many whom Louisa Alcott may have known at that time, did not fit the Frenchman. Surely an audience of to-day is sufficiently broad-minded to tolerate the portrayal of a German on the stage when the period is the middle of last century? Cannot Jo's benevolent professor be reinstated?

"Rise Above It" (Second Edition), at the Comedy.

"*Le mieux est l'ennemi du bien*," as Louis the Fourteenth remarked when he had replaced the witty Montespan by the virtuous Maintenon. The second edition of the Hermione Revue is not an improvement on the first. Mr. Crisham, in particular, has lost his two best songs. On the other hand, we like Miss Baddeley's East-end lady—a dazzling performance—better than her Communist orator; and Miss Gingold as an evacuee ghost triumphantly extends her range. The show opens in fine style with the two Hermiones competing in mutual malice, and the concert-party with new numbers is, incredible as it may seem, funnier than ever. Miss Virginia Winter here still outshines the stars. The singing of the sentimental songs continues to be the least good thing about the show. Wisely we are still allowed to see Miss Gingold giving a talk on music and wooping her warf, Miss Baddeley as a model, and a rumba dancer, and both of them buying hats. One cannot see them too often.

Ballet at the New Theatre.

The Sadler's Wells ballet comes back to town with old favourites, Helpmann, Fonteyn and Lambert, in the best of form, and with a new ballet, Purcell's *Comus*, to be performed on January 14th. The programme for the first week consisted of *Les Patineurs* and the full *Casse Noisette*, which together proved rather a huddle of divertissements even for Christmas. The second act of *Casse Noisette*, with the bewitching and familiar Suite music, provided also the best dancing and the best decor. Remembering *Fantasia*, we were aware of moments when tradition has been left behind by Disney. "Danse Chinoise," mimed by a pair of bow-legged Chinees, no longer amuses a Disney-infected eye; his circle of toadstools was infinitely more delicate and funnier. But nothing so horrible as a Disney fairy would ever be allowed to appear on a stage.

THE MOVIES

"Sullivan's Travels," at the Plaza.
"Appointment for Love," at the Leicester Square.
"Rich Bride," at the Tatler.

A touch, more than a touch, of originality distinguishes the films of Preston Sturges. He hasn't yet, except at instants, knocked us flying, but he is irrepressible, and he grows. *Sullivan's Travels*, picaresque like its title, has delightful and characteristic moments. A yearning film director (Joel Macrea) chucks everything to go in search of poverty. We see him trying on his tatters, setting out with a knapsack to the music of Mendelssohn's Spring Song, trudging the highways with a luxury caravan following, in which sit the publicity department of his company, for he has a contract to run and mustn't be lost sight of. The idea is gaily, drastically developed. If there is a flea in a haystack, it's sure to find him out; he falls into water-butts and sustains the advances of the most dreadful of fluffy widows. His travels bring him a companion: Veronica Lake, trying as hard to get into films as he is trying to get out. And however often he may escape he is always sliding back to Hollywood. The film seems set for an hour of Sturges wit and slapstick; but the mood changes. Hobos loom larger and larger on the screen, and a piece of too open philanthropy leads our traveller to the trouble, the real Life he has been looking for. I should say that this development, which reaches a macabre climax in scenes of a penal settlement, was a mistake, if it weren't so well contrived, and if it didn't grow so naturally from earlier ideas in the film. *Sullivan's Travels* is rounded off with a return to film-making and riches, and the last few minutes revive the breathless syncopated humour of the start. This film is rich in surprise and parody. It has a bit of Chaplin, a bit of Lubitsch, and a great deal of Preston Sturges.

Appointment for Love is the sort of phrase Hollywood can't resist. Its deadly flatness does indeed match a lack of exhilaration that threatens the film of that title at the Leicester Square; romantic comedy may be sweet or dry, but it should sparkle, and the first half-hour or so of Charles Boyer and Margaret Sullavan manoeuvring for situation makes, despite personal charms, for some rather thin fun. *She Wouldn't Live with her Husband* describes the situation which, not being new, requires some briskness of treatment. However, with a skirmish of separate apartments established, the film does reach its sparkle, and its second half provides some gay stretches of Cox-and-Box fooling. Boyer, as an idle and possessive playwright, Miss Sullavan as a doctor who talks breezily of sex attraction in terms of genes, a vulgar light o' love or two, a masterful explorer, and a perfect wonder-struck liftman never emerging from his cage except to provide a tableau at end: the pace is never killing, but the laughs and the bubbles rise. There are, too, at the Leicester Square a couple of excellent "shorts": a Ministry of Information film of the Far East conjuring drama out of a map and arrows, and a British Council documentary of the Hebrides called *The Western Isles*, which shows the life drama of the inhabitants in peace and war with dignity.

The Rich Bride, described as a musical comedy, has no lipstick or hot numbers, but instead the cornfields and harvest time in the Ukraine. It is a whirl (rather on the slow side) of song, woman and Stakhanovism. The moral chiefly involved is how many hours a girl can give to love-making without losing on her figures of production. Not very many, it seems.

WILLIAM WHITEBAIT

Correspondence

THE OTHER GERMANY

SIR,—Your readers may be misled by Mr. Stephen Garry's statement that recent Soviet home and foreign propaganda, and the Stalin-Sikorski declaration, shift the emphasis from Hitlerite Germany to Germans generally.

I would point out that the Soviet watchwords for the 24th anniversary of the Revolution, republished in all countries (here on November 1st), included the following:

"10. Greetings to the German people groaning under the yoke of Hitler's blackguard bands. We wish them victory over bloodthirsty Hitler!"

These watchwords, as always, were the text of hundreds of speeches, articles, banners and streamers in the popular celebrations of the Anniversary.

In his speech on November 6th, Stalin drew a very clear distinction between the German rear and the Hitlerite aggressors, pointing out that the German people have been turned against the ruinous and unnecessary war, and adding: "Only Hitlerite fools do not understand that it is not only the European rear, but also the German rear, of the German Fascist army which is a volcano, ready for eruption and ready to bury Hitler's adventurers."

The Soviet-Polish Declaration of Friendship of December 4th speaks in its first clause of "German Hitlerite Imperialism," with which no compromise is possible.

Zaslavsky's article in *Pravda* of December 10th, republished in all Allied countries, and on the Moscow radio in all languages, said: "The whole of Germany wishes to end the war. It views the future with deep alarm, and has a presentiment of disaster. Hitler's gang is afraid of the German people. He promised the Germans victory, and deceived them. He is now promising them peace, and again he deceives them. He and his gang can bring neither victory nor peace. On the contrary, the longer Hitler and his clique remain in power, the farther away is the peace that the German people so much desire. Peace with Germany can be concluded and will be concluded only when the German people have driven Hitler and his clique out of Germany. Peace will be concluded together with Britain and the U.S.A."

On December 17th *Soviet War News* published an article by Alexandrov (head of the Propaganda Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party), transmitted on the Moscow radio. The article declares, *inter alia*: "It is no accident that the overwhelming majority of German prisoners taken during the last few days on the Moscow front are extremely anti-Hitler. . . . The German people are ceasing to believe in Hitler. They are seeing more and more clearly the misfortunes which Hitler brings to Germany. The hour is not so far distant when in the rear the ground will burst into flames, under the very feet of the Nazis."

These examples could be multiplied. Because Soviet dive-bombers, tanks, artillery, machine-guns and hand-grenades impartially destroy all the Germans under arms on Soviet soil who can be reached, whether they are Nazis or not, it does not follow that Soviet propaganda about the Germans at home draws no distinctions.

ANDREW ROTHSTEIN

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CONSCRIPTION OF WEALTH

SIR,—If I did not mention war casualties in my previous letter, it is because they introduce an entirely different aspect to the problem of equality of sacrifice. Every social group, without distinction, bore its losses in the last war and is prepared to do so in this. Nevertheless, in facing the chances of death the country can still be broadly divided, despite air warfare, into two groups—those who join the Forces, and those who remain in reserved occupations. If we are to bring war casualties into our discussion, this surely is the only relevant classification. It is an important one and raises important questions, such as that of remuneration. But it has no relation to the subject of my previous letter. It is still true that all those who survive the war will be free from conscription at the end of it.

I am not sure what is meant by "the post-survival of industry with full enjoyment of its present powers." If it means that such things as industry's methods of organisation, control, recruitment of management and finance in a post-war world should rigidly conform to those of 1939, my reply to Mr. Wells is that I am not "interested." If, however, he means British industry with power to achieve a progressively increasing material and intellectual standard of living, embued with enterprise, flexibility, efficiency and adaptability, I am fully in favour of its survival.

I am very doubtful if Mr. Reade's proposals about war debt would really benefit the tax-payer. A "drastic measure of nationalisation" is surely bound to increase (unless confiscation is employed) our national debt. True, on the other side there would be certain assets, but can we be sure that they will prove good investments? In a post-war world it may not be very remunerative to own railway systems if the demand is for road transport, or manufacturing establishments that have difficulty in finding a market.

L. J. CADBURY

Northfield.

PAKISTAN

SIR,—Lionel Fielden's qualities are largely neutralised by the way he takes any difference of opinion as an outrage. There is no mystery about Iqbal writing to me. Lord Lothian, who admired Iqbal's excellent book *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, wanted him to come to Oxford as Rhodes Lecturer, and during two consecutive years asked me to conduct the correspondence. Iqbal, who knew that he was a dying man, refused, and in his last letter, a despairing one in which he spoke of his misery at "the chaos I see coming on my vast, undisciplined, and starving country," he corrected a statement I had made in good faith in *The Observer* that he supported Pakistan. I believe it is pretty well known in India that he had changed his mind. "Next, Edward Thompson seems to know that Ambedkar never believed in Pakistan and only does so now, if he does at all, because he has made a pact with the Muslims." Fielden asks if I have read his book. I have, and it does not strike me as being as pro-Pakistan as Fielden found it. I said nothing about a pact with the Muslims, and there is nothing occult or personal about my apparent knowledge of Ambedkar's former opinions. They are printed in one of H.M. Stationery Office's publications (I gave paged references). I am not greatly interested in Pakistan, one way or another. There is a case for it, largely given away by its protagonists now adding Usmanistan (Hyderabad State, overwhelmingly Hindu) and Bengal. There is also a very strong case against it.

EDWARD THOMPSON

Oxford.

COLOUR BAR

SIR,—Although the Secretary for State has on no occasion exercised his power of veto in respect of any enactment affecting the African in Southern Rhodesia, colour-bar legislation is presenting an extremely useful club to those who desire to strike at the proposed amalgamation of that Dominion with the Dependencies of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, as if Southern Rhodesia were the sole delinquent in enforcing this anti-liberal policy.

The "colour-bar" dates back to the time of the early development of the diamond-fields in South Africa when crooked members of the white community used the African as a vehicle for nefarious trading (I.D.B.): subsequently, it was extended to bar the African's entry into other competitive spheres of activity. Its philosophy is not confined to Southern Rhodesia but extends to all parts of Africa where mining or agriculture has been pioneered by men from South Africa. After all, it is the law as they know it!

Although officially recognised in Southern Rhodesia, this bar is in full force in Northern Rhodesia where the mining industry is principally controlled by Johannesburg "interests"; in Kenya, where it flourishes in the suitable soil of Indian "sahib-ism" and where, incidentally, land-apportionment legislation was recently enacted; and, if the Northern Rhodesia-cum-Johannesburg mining-houses are granted the monopoly for the exploitation of the bauxite deposits in Nyasaland, its restrictions will quickly be felt in that territory.

In these circumstances, it would seem not only more fair, but sounder policy to divert the full blast of anti-colour-bar propaganda from Southern Rhodesia towards the fountain head of its most diligent supporter—the Big Business element in our Home Administration. Social planning cannot grow hand in hand with Imperial parsimony, and it is a fact that until a Dependency has, through the development of its natural resources, been able to pay, not only its way, but a profit, not one thought has been given to it by the Treasury. Trinidad and Northern Rhodesia are two outstanding examples of this treatment.

The planning for social advancement in the Dependencies requires money, and if there is to be a uniformity of sequence in the stages of their people's evolution, a Two Generation Plan must be prepared and secured, and not merely short term inducements brandished before the workers to encourage co-operation in building up big business enterprises.

We know that hereditary and environment are the primary factors in social progress and that the experience, adaptability, and special skill of the individual are but of secondary importance if intelligence, the product of heredity, and personality (character and intuition), the product of environment, are not also fully developed. If we are to change the primary conditions in a backward race, however, the only method is that of first developing the secondary conditions *over a generation or more*: and for this the services of a race a degree or two higher in the sociological scale are required. The European living and working among Africans provides experience for the African; his adaptibility to people and changing conditions is developed; and he receives tuition in the arts and special skills.

Apart from those raised in the philosophy of the colour-bar, many others believe that, for the period in which the primary factors for advancement are being well founded, initial protection for the European—some form of artificial "boost"—must be provided to avoid the possibility of the desired process "going into reverse." They argue, quite fallaciously (*cum hoc ergo propter hoc*), that declining European prestige is to be linked with the advancing skill of the African; and it is to be feared that the advocate for the introduction of Trade Union Control in the Dependencies are falling into the same trap. What is wanted is not Trade Union but *Social Communion*, scientifically planned to embrace both the worker and the peasant, and with that the unofficial colour-bar will die an unnoticed death as its official counterpart is actually doing under the guidance of its enlightened Prime Minister, in Southern Rhodesia.

R. MURRAY-HUGHES

Royal Societies Club,
London, S.W.1.

EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN

SIR,—Critic remarks that in this war fewer men have made way for women than in the last, and surmises that the women have either atrophied or ossified, or that the men have become more armour-plated. Both his guesses are near the truth. In the last war, a large number of women who took over men's jobs and subsequently graduated into positions of responsibility were drawn from the houseworking middle classes. Their lack of "business" experience was made up for by enthusiasm, energy and quick development of latent talents. But the past twenty years of office work have sapped much of that vitality, vide the enormous, new and rather melancholy class of female secretaries and shorthand typists, the climax of whose education is achieved at a typewriter. Clerical work is not a particularly ennobling or exhilarating form of labour. When it was done exclusively by men, it had at least a virile objective, from the worker's point of view, in that it kept his home going. Most women work to keep themselves, or their parents—a commendable, but not a natural and all-sufficing instinct. Again, man's interest lay largely in the home he was working to keep, and this made the job itself more tolerable. Too many women have to find their whole interest in life in their office, and those creative and organising abilities needed to make a home have to be squeezed into the narrow

scope of a desk. As a result, men have become accustomed to women's subordinate, sometimes servile, position (a status they rarely occupied in their own homes) and to-day, despite wartime conditions, they continue to resist opportunities for women to establish their intelligence or display initiative. It is an attitude that is creating a shameful waste of ability and leading to the retention of men in jobs that women, despite the tradition that has been built up, are quite capable of doing.

The women most suited to the life have unwittingly made more durable the armour plating of the older men. Those valuable, right-hand secretaries and assistants have a lot to answer for! They have relieved men of a mass of detailed, worrying work; smoothed their paths by the exercise of feminine tact and intuition, and a patient concentration on the lesser, but essential, points of a job. The result, to put it brutally, is the lengthening of many a man's span of business life, and the creation of a form of "office suttee" which is disastrous not only for the women, but, by retaining the elderly in harness, for all youth.

JOAN A. T. TURNER

FREEDOM OF THE STREET

SIR,—May I call your attention and that of your readers to an incident which occurred outside the Communist Party meeting at the Stoll Theatre last Sunday?

I had just sold a copy of the *New Leader*, the organ of the Independent Labour Party, when I was approached by a man, who had been speaking with the stewards, and told I was not allowed to sell papers there. When I protested and said it was not a matter for him to decide, he snatched the papers out of my hands and took them into the theatre.

When I consulted a police inspector, he told me there was no restriction on selling outside the hall, and that therefore the man could be charged with theft if I could identify him. He had disappeared, however, and I did not see him again. A little later, Communist Party supporters attempted to prevent the sale of the *Socialist Appeal* by surrounding the man who had copies and shouting that it was a "Fascist paper."

Communist Party members have been instructed recently to treat I.L.P. supporters and those whom they call "Trotskyists" as they would treat Nazis.

The I.L.P. protested against the ban on the *Daily Worker*. Evidently the Communist Party does not believe in the freedom of the press for other working-class papers.

FLORENCE STAMP

[In regard to the Communist instructions referred to above the issue of the *New Leader* for December 6 states that the C.P. leaflet stated that "The Trotskyists and those in the I.L.P. who pay lip service to Trotskyism fight to smash the Popular Front and assisted Franco in Spain. To-day they are the assistants of Hitler and the Munícheers in Britain. TREAT THE TROTSKYIST QUISLINGS AS YOU WOULD TREAT A NAZI." But why should our correspondent have imagined that the C.P. believed in the freedom of the press?—ED. *N.S. & N.*]

HOME GUARDS

SIR,—Home Guards are shortly to be required to undertake an obligation to perform 48 hours' parades, etc., a month, or to resign. They may not try it out and then resign if it is impracticable; they must decide once for all and be subject to prosecution and imprisonment if they fail. I am alarmed at the effect on the minds of even enthusiastic volunteers. Forty-eight hours a month means a two-hour operation on Sunday morning and two hours at lectures or parades *five other nights* a week. It is not comparable to the 48 hours required of fire-watchers, which only means that four nights a month they watch (or rest) at their office instead of at home. In fact, the position is worse than the figures I have given. For an average three-quarters of an hour must be allowed for travelling to and from parades. Also, two hours' lecturing is more than most men can take in after a day's work: the probable time is 1½ hours. This, as you will see, would mean that no evenings at all would be left free.

I am sure that the War Office, which fully appreciates the importance of the Home Guard, does not really intend to enforce such preposterous obligations, but I do respectfully urge that it vary the terms of its demands so that the more conscientious Home Guards will not feel compelled to resign.

RAYMOND POSTGATE

TRELAWNY

SIR,—I called Trelawny a "liar and a cad" for two reasons.—(1) When Byron was lying dead upon his bier at Missolonghi, Trelawny entered the room, lifted the pall, and examined Byron's lame leg. (2) In the first edition of his *Recollections* he described this incident and asserted that Byron had a club foot. "Apollo," he wrote with glee, "had the foot of a satyr." In the second edition he cancelled this statement and admitted there was no visible sign of any deformity.

A man who probes the corpse of a dead friend is a cad. A man who publishes an untrue account of what he saw is a liar. Trelawny, whatever Mr. Rowse may say, did both.

HAROLD NICOLSON

CHILD CONSCRIPTION

SIR,—Surely Mr. D. N. W. Irvine is mistaken in believing that child conscription would necessarily "sow the seeds of war in the minds of children"? It is far more probable that the Government's intention is exactly the reverse; that they hope, by practical corporate training, to inculcate our youth with the sense of co-operative responsibility they will need desperately as adults in a post-war world, and also, to make them understand, so as to hate, the realities of war. As a married woman teacher with experience in both girls' and boys' schools, I deplore the "shield-our-children-utterly-from-war" attitude of so many parents. Certainly get the children away from bombs and avoid child suffering, wherever possible; but at the same time instruct adolescents at least to a sane appreciation of our motives in fighting, or they will grow up into the same comfortable apathy which largely brought about the present conflict, and one more generation is at the moment dying in vain. Incidentally, it is misleading to talk of "child" conscription. Individuals of 16–18 are adolescents, and adolescents, I submit firmly, are not children.

The new conscription scheme is as yet unformulated and my interpretation of the spirit behind it may be wrong. I can only say that the points I have made above are largely those emphasised a short while ago in an address to an audience half boys, half adults, by the prime organiser of the Air Training Corps, the Headmaster of Uppingham. If such aims animate the Air Training Corps, it would be pessimistic to suppose the new scheme has lesser ideals.

The Air Training Corps, however, is a voluntary body, whereas conscription introduces the element of compulsion. The systematic home planning of the Soviet since the last war, our own gathering momentum in united war effort have lately made us see that compulsion for the common good is a very different weapon from compulsion as seen by the Nazis. Once let parents be convinced that the proposed conscription embodies the right ideals, and is for an unselfish, educational, as well as practical purpose, and the bogey of a nation of little belligerents will be exploded. It is up to the Government to achieve this parental conviction; the adolescents themselves will need little compulsion, they have all the requisite energy and enthusiasm. Let us not fail to turn them into wide-awake citizens of the future by our own short-sightedness now.

ELAINE HOGBEN

The King's School, Pontefract,
Yorkshire.

SCOTLAND IN MODERN TIMES

SIR,—In her review of my *Scotland in Modern Times*, Miss Freda White scolds me gently for omitting to refer to the Rising of 1745, and assigns to me as my presumable motive the fact that most readers have heard about it before. If I had in fact done anything so odd as to leave the Rising out of a History of Scotland, and on such grounds, she would do well to scold me a great deal more forcibly than she has done.

If she will be so good as to look at the book's jacket, at its preface, or at the usual list of the author's work, she will find that *Scotland in Modern Times*, though fashioned so that it can be read independently, is the final volume of a six-volume general *History of Scotland*, and that the dates given for its predecessor are 1638-1748. And if she will refer to p. 47 of the book she has reviewed, she will find there an explanation of the fact that the two volumes overlap. The social history of modern Scotland begins, in effect, during the seventeen-twenties; while the politics of the years before 1748 are the final phase of the long civil wars which began in the minority of Mary, and have thus been considered in the previous volume.

AGNES MURE MACKENZIE

15 Langbourne Mansions,
Highgate, N.6.

[Miss White replies:— I am sorry to have caused Dr. Mure Mackenzie offence, and I was naturally aware that her book was the last of a series. But an historian surely cannot assume that students will have read her previous works. I still consider that a book covering a dated period should be self-contained, and that in one of this length there should have been included a summary of the Jacobite risings, even if it were confined to a few paragraphs, with the reference back to the previous volume of page 47. If the author will put herself in the place of a reader ignorant of Scottish history, reading this work, she will realise how puzzling the reader would find the omission.—ED. *N.S. & N.*]

TOMORROW WILL COME

Sir,—I am writing on behalf of Miss W. M. Almedingen whose book *Tomorrow Will Come* was reviewed in your issue of 15th November.

In the course of your review you state: "I have read few stranger descriptions of what revolution feels like, than her record of the descent from genteel poverty to penury, starvation, rags, the hospital and the street."

In this passage you convey, probably unintentionally, the impression that the authoress ended her descent as a prostitute. Actually there is nothing in the book to give such an idea and it is in fact untrue to the point of ludicrousness.

As this is a matter which affects the author's reputation, not as a writer but as a private person, I think you will agree that a correction in the pages of your journal is indicated and I should be very glad if you would take whatever steps are necessary to have such vindication printed as soon as possible.

Princes House,
Jermyn Street, S.W.1.

A. HEATH,
(for A. M. HEATH & CO., LTD.)

[Of course Mr. Pritchett only referred to the extreme poverty of the author at this period: the street did not imply "on the streets." Both Mr. Pritchett and we ourselves regret that any such misinterpretation has been possible.—ED., *N.S. & N.*]

RUSSIAN WAR HORSES

SIR,—In spite of mechanisation thousands of horses are being used by our Russian Allies. It is impossible to give exact figures, but some idea of the numbers involved may be gauged by the fact that when war began Poland's horse population was five million and in total war all forms of transport are brought into service. Russia is many times larger than Poland. British press correspondents in Russia constantly refer to "horse drawn supply trains consisting of wagons or sleighs and tens of thousands of cavalry."

The R.S.P.C.A. has received through the British Government from the Soviet Union a first request for £40,000 worth of veterinary supplies for Army horses and we desire to raise £100,000 to meet this and subsequent requirements.

The R.S.P.C.A. is to the horse in war what the Red Cross is to the soldier. May I beg space for generous help from your readers for these animals? Any donation will be gratefully acknowledged through our War Animals (Allies) Funds.

R.S.P.C.A.,
105, Jermyn Street,
London, S.W.1.

ROBERT GOWER,
Chairman

BOOKS IN GENERAL

To stand in the docks and watch the ships come up through the fog from the convoys is one of the major experiences of this war. The arrival of a ship has, of course, always been an emotional moment, but now the emotions are overwhelming. One's new emotions are of awe and gratitude and they are mixed with something like unbelief and uneasiness in the mind. The stained and dirty vessel thumps out of one tunnel of fog, shows its bizarre camouflage for a while and is bundled away into another, not like a ghost but like something which has *been* a ghost and has crossed back over the line into life again. There is even a touch of embarrassment in the grins of the sailors as they stand in their greasy singlets by the rail; and it adds to your emotion that these really magnificent men of the war come into port looking like some comic paper-hanging turn with the slop still wet on their slacks, and the oil smudged on their clownish faces. You turn to the boy standing next to you in a Dale Street pub and ask what sort of voyage he has just had and he does not mention torpedoes. He replies, "the grub was not so good."

What the war at sea is like may be seen from three short books. They are all good first hand stuff. *My name is Frank*,* whose author broadcast a famous postscript, one of the few pieces of real public speaking in this war, that is to say one which appeared to come from a man and not from a committee, is really first-hand. They are a series of terse war sketches taken down as they were spoken by a natural moralist who has actually read his Robinson Crusoe and his Bible, and who seems to have read his Hemingway but has not. There is a link between this little book and Miss Elspeth Huxley's *Atlantic Ordeal* which conveys the remarkable character and resource of Mary Cornish, who spent eight days in a crowded open boat with a handful of little boys from the *City of Benares*. The behaviour of Miss Cornish's children as they huddled about her, with the Lascars eying them in case the children were given extra water, reminds one at times of pages out of *High Wind in Jamaica*. "Frank" found another of the boats of this tragic ship with sixteen dead children in it. But the outstanding book is *Two Survived*, not because of the experience it describes—though that is extraordinary and would write itself—but because of the many-sidedness of the narrative. The other writers do a good piece of reporting in one dimension. Mr. Guy Pearce Jones has added another dimension: the element of human temperament and character, and I put *Two Survived* among the two or three exceptional pieces of reporting this war has so far produced. The average reporter is restricted by the façade of the story he has to tell. Time, patience and *flair* are required to get at reality. Mr. Guy Pearce Jones had this flair and patience and though, as I have said, his story of how two men out of seven survived 70 days in an open boat between the Cape Verde Islands and the Bahamas, would be readable merely on its merits as an adventure, he has turned a gruesome thriller into something that is lived from day to day in human terms.

The *Anglo-Saxon*, carrying coal to Buenos Aires, was attacked and sunk at night by a German raider, a thousand miles off the coast of Africa. The Germans machine-gunned and shelled the ship to pieces; and when they had done this they wiped out all the survivors clinging to rafts in the water. They could see them because the rafts had lights, but the ship's jolly boat in which seven members of the crew had got away had no light. It escaped. Three of those seven were badly wounded, some of the others slightly. Yet, by sunrise they were cheerful enough to decide to let wind and current take them 3,000 miles to the Bahamas, feeling certain that they would be picked up long before they got there. The jolly boat was an undecked 18-foot vessel with a dipping lug, there was the usual half-empty jar of water, some tins of condensed milk and mutton and biscuits. So far it is the familiar situation, not so good as it might be, but not so bad. But within 12 days the water had gone, no one could touch the food, the stench of gangrened wounds sickened the men. Pilcher, the second "Sparks," who was badly wounded, died; the gunner, a marine who would keep singing a silly song, *Not One in a Million Would Complain*, "slipped overboard," unable to stand the pain any longer; the mate, the strong man and directing will of the party, collapsed. The enormous effort of will he had made at the beginning had exhausted him. He sank from complete command to apathy. The survivors listened to the mate and another officer making a suicide pact and, after shaking hands all round, saw them drop locked in each other's arms into the sea. The hair of their heads could be seen for a long time fanning out in the wake. The cook then went mad, and Widdicombe, one of the two remaining sane ones, lost his temper and knocked the cook overboard, whereat he was rescued by the other. Finally, only two men were left. The short-tempered Widdicombe was one and Tapscott, a Cardiff man, was the other. The sequel is theirs.

Widdicombe and Tapscott were an interesting contrast. Widdicombe was the man of temperament and imagination, up in the skies one minute, down in the depths the next, a quarrelsome, tempestuous, and violent man. As a boy he had been a trial to his family and had grown up in one of those family "situations" which disorganise the emotions of children. Tapscott was quieter, more obstinate and prosaic. The two men didn't much like each other. No rain fell and they lay scalded, scabbed and blistered by the sub-tropical sun. Twice when starvation and thirst had pretty well done for them Tapscott proposed they should go over the side and Widdicombe agreed, but once they were in the water Widdicombe ratted. Widdicombe, the more imaginative and more despairing of the two, clung more frenziedly to life. At a certain point despair seemed to energise him; it was he who had taken a new lease of life after the suicide of the mate. But Widdicombe was not all temperament. He had observed that Tapscott could swim in the water. If they would swim in their present state of weakness there was life in them still, he argued, and climbed back into the boat. Tapscott, one of nature's obeyers, followed. Six more weeks they sailed and drifted. One night they broke the compass case and drank the alcohol. They might as well die tight. Waking up six hours later, they found rain falling for the first time. In the end, shrunken to the state of skeletons, having starved on crabs and winkles and seaweed for weeks, they did in fact reach the Bahamas. It is an interesting psychological fact that Widdicombe, the unstable and temperamental one, recovered far more quickly than Tapscott, the phlegmatic. But there is little satisfaction in that moral. Widdicombe, in his elation, took a boat home as soon as possible, the boat was torpedoed and he was drowned. Tapscott is still in the Bahamas.

Pliability, detachment and a precise eye for the small daily crests of drama, are the making of this narrative. The phases of Pilcher's madness, for example, are noted from the initial stupor to the first wail, through the scabrous songs of the next day, to the final maniacal screams. There is the awful moment when the mate brings the axe and offers to amputate Pilcher's wounded foot and is then unable to bring himself to the act. The suicide episode is macabre in its matter-of-fact detail and unbearable when, as the two suicides stand on the gunwale, Widdicombe, the frantic egoist, makes a bid for the mate's overcoat. But none of these things would have been so effective in writing, if the plain, normal characters of the men had not been established and more or less in their own terms. Pilcher was a "proper gentleman," Penny, the gunner, was a fatalistic marine, Morgan, the cook, was "all right," and "he lived just down the street." But he "talked" and was apt to "act silly." The mate was "decent." This inarticulateness or understatement sets off the narrative and makes it really formidable. One has seen not only an unimaginable experience but something of the variousness of human nature.

V. S. PRITCHETT

* *My Name is Frank.* By Frank Laskier. Allen & Unwin. 2s. 6d.
Atlantic Ordeal. By Elspeth Huxley. Chatto & Windus. 4s.
Two Survived. By Guy Pearce Jones. Hamish Hamilton. 7s. 6d.

KIPLING'S VERSE

A Choice of Kipling's Verse. Made by T. S. ELIOT with an essay on Rudyard Kipling. *Faber and Faber.* 8s. 6d.

Among writers of the last hundred years provisionally labelled Fascist the names of Carlyle, Lawrence, Kipling recur. I don't think this is mere witch-hunting, though no doubt the wish to find a pedigree for Fascism rather than to do justice to the authors concerned has been responsible. It's unfair; very well; but so always is the application of later knowledge. It may (when we choose our moment to reread one of these authors) be very much to the point. There is a fairly exact sense, for example, in which the Carlyle hatreds and hero-worship can be linked with modern dictatorships; and even Carlyle's admirers would admit the connection. The cases of Lawrence and Kipling are nearer to us, less defined. Lawrence's "dark gods" hover equivocally. The appeal is to the individual; there is no political message. But does it end there? For Lawrence's contemporaries, these "dark gods" were too closely identified with personal rebellion and sex to take on the tinge of politics; free association, free love, and a nature colony in Mexico or the Pacific seemed the extent of the new horizons. And yet looking back, turning over the pages of *Women in Love* or *Fantasia of the Unconscious*, the reader may wonder where the yells are leading, why the yells must be listened to and the intellect stopped, what kind of society it will be that is finally ruled from the diaphragm. Some stirrings of uneasiness, at least, may be felt about Lawrence.

And Kipling? Here the straight appeal is to Imperialism and to power achieved. Not so much a future as a mystical past is invoked. At first the globe-trotter, exploring the red portion of the map, keeps his pictures clear. Unlike Carlyle and Lawrence, impatient prophets, Kipling was the reporter, the spectacled onlooker keeping his anonymity and following his story to the end. His copy came fresh, barrack rooms and parade squares and troopships fascinated, and a skirmish to him was like a bullfight to Hemingway. These discoveries the *soldat manqué*—more lifelike than if he had found his home in an officer's mess—produced, I think, his best verse. He had an eye and an ear; above all, he had a nose. He sniffed. Glory led to the glory-hole, and on closer acquaintance it stank. *Ca pue!* is the reaction of the sensitive, but Kipling's whiff is his tartest, most genuine quality. The brute smell of humanity, grinning, trudging, suffering and killing stoically, underdogs of one breed trampling underdogs of another, excited him naturally, and in later years disagreeably; but there is a sharp sweetness, too, as of an onion, in the cockney whine and swagger of the early ballads. Physical impact and the delight of senses rushed make the best of *Barrack-room Ballads* still surprising: men, animals, machines jostled on equal terms. "Boots, boots, boots"; the tune is music-hall rather than border ballad, and this is the tradition that suits Kipling best. To that tune, immediate and limited in its appeal, he can preserve, as it were, the simplicities of a response to what is cheap, cunning and discordant in life. The rasping surface is not only novel but true to an underlying obsession. What disgusts about Kipling isn't his scratch or his howl, but the holy purr of contentment that

rises from his contemplation of cruelties. Turn the pages of Mr. Eliot's anthology and you will find Kipling at all levels and stages—good, bad, indifferent; but among much that is second-rate or second-hand two sides of this extraordinary talent stand out, the workaday Kipling and the churchgoer. He slips easily from the smoking-room concert to the cathedral loud with psalms; special gatherings both. His forms are the recitation and the hymn. "Recessional" seems to me the most revealing of Kipling's poems because it has drugged most audiences and because here, when the fumes have cleared, we can see exactly how the trick is done. The literal meaning is that our Empire is under God, that we should be humble after conquests, that we should remember other dynasties that have triumphed and fallen. War is spoken of in the past; this Empire hymn might even pass as Christian. But the tone, the deep organ-swell! Resonant phrasing (remember the aisle and the lectern) gives a wholly different emphasis; humble hearts vanish in the proclamation of the Chosen Race; the God addressed is Jahweh of the front lines; nostalgia for war is so potent that renunciatory words acclaim the thing renounced. Probably it is the most war-drugged hymn in the English language; and it was designed to be sung by congregations, too peace-loving for Kipling's taste, in churches where the Second Lesson had gained a victory over the First. Kipling (as Mr. Eliot points out) always took exactly into account the audience he was addressing; as a poem *Recessional* wouldn't stir men to action, but as a hymn—! This cunning over-awareness of an audience is both the strength and the weakness of Kipling as a poet; it ensures a means, it precludes either intimacy or style; and it seems to me inseparable from Kipling's conception of the craftsman as against the artist. The poet becomes a word-craftsman, the soldier an empire-craftsman, God is the master-craftsman. This delight in the crafts is one of the most amiable qualities of the early Kipling, but with years it, too, becomes crafty. It loses its human attachment. The hard-headed rhymer turns mystic. Foot-slogging Tommy Atkins on the job gives way to The Blood lording it over palm and pine; and since the poet's job is simply to move others to action, it ends by a scorn of intellect and beauty. Only such beauty or intellect as is needed for religious-political persuasion will be conceded by the craftsman of words. Hence the negative nature of Kipling's achievement in verse, its power over certain people and in certain surroundings, its emptiness away from them.

Kipling is not a great poet. Mr. Eliot distinguishes between great poetry and great verse, and argues that Kipling achieved the latter; unfortunately, in making this distinction, he provides neither definition nor examples. Is there such a thing as great verse? Did Gay, for example, write great verse or less-than-great poetry? It is a fascinating and highly debatable point. I should say that there are in literature borderline cases over which one may hesitate. Many translations of foreign masterpieces, some verse written by prose masters (Swift), and from time to time the careless metrical outpouring of genius seem to fall into this category. Byron, perhaps, is the most teasing example of a writer, unquestionably great, who rarely seems to touch greatness in poetry; it might reasonably be said of him that he is master of some different art from that of Shelley or Keats; call it, then, great verse. Mr. Eliot, however, corners the genre for Kipling. It may be that he has in mind far lower levels of poetry—Macaulay's *Lays* or Scott's ballads? One can't tell. Mr. Eliot asserts without explaining.

The problem of poetry and verse leads Mr. Eliot to another point, which is that Kipling aimed only at the writing of verse and cannot be judged by other standards. This is true of the barrack-room Kipling (in my opinion, the most interesting) and even of the hymn-singing Kipling; but there is a good deal of verse-writing in between which aims at being poetry and misses. Even in Mr. Eliot's very acute and personal selection there are examples of mongrel forms, cheap rhetoric and a general woodenness that Kipling rarely escapes even at his best. In his literary moods, the influences of Henley and of Housman seem uppermost; he rivals the first but falls far short of the second. "Danny Deever" is probably the best poem in the book, and "If" the worst; and with a touch of slyness the editor has put "If" next to an admirable version of a Horace ode. The reader who hasn't opened his Kipling for years will find here a few agreeable surprises, especially in the poems "Song of the Galley Slaves," "Mine Sweepers, 1914-18," "The Way through the Woods," and in the section headed "Epitaphs of the War." Mr. Eliot's introduction puts forward warily a case for Kipling. It is—for Mr. Eliot—a very long piece of critical writing that walks round and round its subject, to dart in with an occasional brilliance. I am not convinced; and I don't pretend to understand the claim made on the wrapper that *A Choice of Kipling's Verse* is "something of a landmark in the history of English literature." A surprise is hardly a landmark.

Mr. Eliot rejects the idea that there is any Fascist tendency or even any "flattery of national, racial or imperial vanity" in Kipling. The second of these accusations seems to me proved by many passages, some of them reprinted here. The first is more questionable, but if mob appeal, appeal to cruelty, hatred of intellect, and the propagation of a politico-religious race doctrine are indications of the near-Fascist or pre-Fascist writer, then Kipling is one. His aims, it seems to me, made it impossible for him to be a great poet. Fascism itself appears to rule out the possibility of any good art, and we must expect its forerunners to share the taint. G. W. STONIER

COSMOPOLITAN REVIEW

The Lost Peace. By HAROLD BUTLER. *Faber.* 10s. 6d.

Mr. Butler, an official and later Director of the International Labour Office, served for years at the centre of international negotiation, and supplemented that experience by tireless journeying from China to Chile. He is as near as may be the true cosmopolitan, who views all countries with benevolence and understanding. He writes admirably—his annual I.L.O. reports used to rank as international events—and in this book a pervasive irony, like a delicate *sauce piquante*, flavours the gravity of his reflections. These dwell upon Geneva, and then upon various States in the inter-war period. The chapter on France is brilliant, penetrating and just, yet written out of a great love and faith in the French people. That on Germany is weaker, for Mr. Butler's goodwill does not quite stretch to cover a nation whose tragedy is so involved with unlikeableness. Yet he likes and mourns for Austria, the land of graceful manners, whose Nazis, as savage as their compatriot Führer, stepped into what the author, with double meaning, calls "the blood-stained shoes" of Dollfuss. He assesses the crucial weakness of the Succession States, which might have survived united, but in isolation "were foredoomed to perish as soon as European security collapsed with the failure of the League, the decay of France, and the indifference of Britain." His thoughts on Britain would be worth reading; but that chapter is missing; the Commissioner of the Southern Region, in wartime, must keep a lock upon his desk. Some day, perhaps. The peace was lost, so he concludes, because of a conflict between the growing interdependence of the world,

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and the political nationalism and economic separatism of the states. Also because, in face of the new mechanised warfare, the peace-loving countries would not unite for defence, and because distress threw the peoples into a moral anarchy which bred inertia on one side and aggression on the other. He attributes the failure of the League to absence of popular support, which shows how a high official, whose conversation is entirely with people of importance, is sound-proofed against the people's voice. In historic fact there was immense support and understanding of the League among the common people of the Western European States; strong enough in Britain, for example, for the Conservatives to win the perjured election of 1935 solely because they proclaimed fidelity to the Covenant; but the people were helpless against the reactionary politicians, bureaucracy, and newspaper-owners who formed the governing power. Mr. Butler ends with "questions for the future." His answers include the economic reconstruction and planning of Europe which have become common ground among the forward-looking, and a deferred political settlement. Rather oddly, since he shows elsewhere a realistic awareness of the indivisibility of peace, he mistrusts any attempt to codify an international law or bond, and is strongly opposed to federation. He does foresee regional blocks for defence; two for Europe, dependent upon Britain and Russia. Even a merciful mind, and one sympathetic to national cultures, can display strange freaks; Mr. Butler favours the brutal Nazi device of exchange of populations for minorities. The rest of his policy, however, tempered to discretion by long experience of human perversity, is based upon the belief in human brotherhood which he holds to be the only constructive force of the future, and it is that charity which lends this book its wisdom.

FREDA WHITE

LIBERAL CHRISTIANITY

Victory Begins at Home. By G. H. GRETTON. *Allen and Unwin.* 7s. 6d.

Dr. Gretton's thesis is that we cannot win the war or the peace unless we have a positive creed to set against the Nihilism of the Nazis. This creed must, he holds, be based on a liberal interpretation of Christian doctrine, such as, for example, is to be found in the Five Point Manifesto published last year by the British Churches, and must issue in concrete proposals. Dr. Gretton rightly sees the main distinction between the Nazis' way of living and that which has grown up among the democratic peoples of Western Europe during the last three hundred years in their different attitudes to the individual. The democracies are prepared to regard the individual as an end in himself, with a right to happiness in this world and a chance of immortality in the next, and in the last resort to consign government to the role of a large-scale organisation for enabling the individual to enjoy his right and to avail himself of his chance. The Nazis see him only as a means to be used in the pursuit of purposes other than his own. He is a drop of blood in an ocean of racial purity, or a cog in a political or military machine, never an end in himself. Christianity is the only religion which has consistently maintained the status of the individual as an end and democracy the only form of government which does not run directly counter to the implications of Christianity.

Once you are prepared to take this view of the individual, a number of consequences follow which constitute the main points in Dr. Gretton's programme of war and peace aims. Let me take a few recommendations at random. During the war there should be greater regulation of evacuation and special schools and camps should be built for evacuee children; there must be compulsory conscription for all unemployed persons as farm workers, and family allowances of not less than 5s. a week should be paid in respect of each child. After the war both maximum and minimum incomes must be fixed by the State; all key industries must be nationalised and universal free primary school education should be made available for all children up to 15, to be followed by a further free course of education on the public school level for those whose talents enable them to profit by it.

As the reader will gather, it is all very enlightened and sensible; yet the book is in important respects open to caveat criticism. It is not merely that Dr. Gretton mounts hobby horses which are not germane to this theme; that, for example, he devotes several pages to a diatribe on ornamental and excessive furniture; that he proposes no recipe for inducing mankind to adopt his eminently sensible programme; that he falls victims to the heresy that mankind, having been engaged for several years in mass hating and mutual hurting on a planetary scale, will somehow be better for the process at the end of it: "Man," he writes, "will not suddenly become wise and good; most of his old imperfections will remain. But he will have learnt a good deal in the last years and with good leadership he will be ready to improve his way of life greatly." But if we were foolish enough and wicked enough to get into our present mess, why should several years' concentration of all our energies on increasing our efficiency in slaughter improve our characters? A greater stumbling block is the special pleading which does not hesitate to make use of anything and everything that can be used for the greater glory of liberal Christianity. One feels at times that, for Dr. Gretton, any stick is good enough to build an altar with. Thus he argues that resistance to the Nazis in all countries has been proportional to the strength of Christian belief. The most irreligious have crumbled the most easily. This was written before June 22nd, so Dr. Gretton, seeking to meet the exigencies of the situation without sacrificing too much of his argument, covers himself with a footnote informing us that "Russian resistance, too, is at least based on the belief in a constructive way of life." No doubt, but not on the Christian faith.

For generations, he says again, no Christian Church has had any influence in Germany. The German Churches did not counter materialist science, maintain themselves in independence of the State, keep themselves free from sectarian discussions, or offer an acceptable doctrine to convince the unbelief of the young. Hence—since nature abhors a spiritual as well as a physical vacuum—the Nazis. Is there not one of these charges, one wonders, which could be brought against the British Churches? Apparently not one of them, for here there are no Nazis, but only Dr. Gretton telling us that the way to effect successful resistance in this world and salvation in the next is "the way of spiritual righteousness."

It will be seen that the bricks upon which Dr. Gretton founds his thesis are built with insufficient straw. Nevertheless, the straws, if I may mix my metaphors, are admirably calculated to show which way the winds of the future are likely to blow.

C. E. M. JOAD

HIGHBROW FIREMAN

London's Burning. By MAURICE RICHARDSON. *Hale.* 5s.

This book has the virtues of being honest, accurate and intelligent. It is first-rate reporting. If Mr. Richardson had more power of criticism, a greater self-respect, and more confidence in his own judgment and intelligence, it might have risen to being a work of imaginative power. But unfortunately, a certain servile streak in his nature —which he frankly confesses to—prevents him from detaching himself from his circumstances and regarding his fellow firemen except with a kind of gaping admiration, as creatures infinitely superior to his own "decadent, unsatisfactory and probably subversive self."

All the same, if one regrets his failure to write a book of imaginative power and wide sympathy, it is because his narrative is so strong and truthful within its limits. His account of training for the Fire Service, life at a sub-station, and of the characters of his fellow firemen, astonished me again and again, because it corresponded so exactly with my own experiences at a different training centre and a different sub-station. There is something at once stereotyped and yet original and vital about the Cockney character. The vast organisation of London seems to have succeeded in producing a set of characters—"flat" from the novelist's point of view—who look alike, say the same things, experience the same reactions and emotions, and yet who amaze one with the richness and warmth of their life, their humour, their passions, their humanity and good-feeling.

Mr. Richardson tells us that he joined the A.F.S. in the late summer of 1940 "to dodge the Army." This disconcerting confession will not be very gratifying to his fellow firemen of military age, since it tars them, by implication, with the same brush. Perhaps, too, the confession is overscrupulous, since in joining the A.F.S. Mr. Richardson was certainly not dodging the danger of the ladder from which he eventually fell fifty feet. All he was doing was choosing a particularly dangerous job because he preferred it to military discipline. In making a quite permissible and legitimate choice of one branch of the services rather than another, I do not see why he was "dodging" anything, unless it is "dodging" to choose something which the country wants and one happens to like, rather than something which it also wants but which one particularly dislikes.

As soon as he arrived at the Training Centre Mr. Richardson struck unlucky with his instructor. His description of this bullying upstart is one of the best things in the book:

> He marched us to one of the instructional pumps on the school playground and introduced himself: "There's one thing I'd better warn you boys at the start. You'll find me a good instructor; I can teach you more in three weeks than some of these fire-brigade men have ever learnt, but the trouble with me is"—his voice dropped to a thick, hoarse whisper—"I'm a bit of a bully. It's not my fault; it's because I've got blood pressure. So when I give one of you a bloody good rollicking you musn't take it to heart. It's just my way. I don't mean anything."

The instructor's description of himself turned out to be quite accurate. (I have a theory that one should always believe those confessions that people make at the beginning of a relationship. They are at once a genuine warning and a claim for sympathy, stored up for the future when the worst happens. They always come true.)

As a matter of fact this instructor is by no means typical of the A.F.S. as it is to-day. The majority of the instructors are patient, friendly and tolerant. They earn the affection and gratitude of their trainees.

When Mr. Richardson arrived at his sub-station with the other recruits, the A.F.S. woman-section officer in charge said, "You boys are in luck. . . . There's no red tape and everybody treats you like a brother." Oddly enough, Mr. Richardson goes on, "this turned out to be quite true." This also corresponds to my own experience. Mr. Richardson writes movingly of how "Sometimes I used to lie awake tingling with a sense of elation at being one of the mob. . . . The theory which I knew, evidentially, to be true but hadn't been able to test for myself in practice, that prolo was a better type than the class I came from, more instinctively sociable, better integrated and with just as much, if not more, potential intelligence, was being demonstrated to me all the time."

In the above paragraph I think that the observation is true, the conclusion which Mr. Richardson draws from it false. When he remarks on the tact, the kindness, the vitality, the intelligence and the courage of his fellow firemen, I am in complete agreement with him. But, in a moment of illumination, he explains these qualities by saying that the poor live in crowded circumstances in which they are bound to develop a sense of consideration for each other. This also is true and the fact that there is a reason for their good qualities does not detract from them. It is true, too, that

the poor are better integrated socially than are the middle classes in the respectable anarchy of their self-seeking interests, but this also is due to circumstances. It is surely dangerous to draw the conclusion that all members of one section of society are superior to all members of another, because such a conclusion would lead one to think that there was a virtue in poverty. This is surely the last conclusion which Mr. Richardson would wish to draw. Yet he does not really face up to the problem of how to improve conditions without the poor acquiring the selfishness of the class from which Mr. Richardson comes.

Mr. Richardson's trite assumption that his fellow firemen are innately superior to his fellow intellectuals gives a twist of falsity to his otherwise remarkably honest record. On one occasion he relates that one of the firemen had a passion for "the early post-war German films, Caligari,—*Warning Shadows*—the ones that cinema-struck highbrows in the 'twenties used to rave about." Why was it admirable of the fireman to like these films if it was contemptible of the highbrow to do so? It is difficult not to conclude that it is himself whom Mr. Richardson despises and not the "typical *New Statesman* reviewer." (Incidentally, he has himself written excellent reviews in this periodical.) His book might have been the "minor classic" which his publishers hope it is if he had recognised that the truth about the courage of the firemen in the Blitz is a truth about humanity—equally true of public-school boys and intellectuals in the Libyan desert—and not just an illustration of a thesis "known evidentially" about the proletariat. STEPHEN SPENDER

NEW WRITING

Folios of New Writing. Autumn 1941. Edited by JOHN LEHMANN. *Hogarth Press.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

In gratitude for a distinguished past and in hope of an equally distinguished future one is compelled to dwell on the make-up of the Autumn *New Writing* as its strong point. It is beautifully produced on white paper and bears no trace of the disagreeable operations which the paper shortage has forced upon our publishers, re-pulping, margin clipping, and what not. The strongest contributions are poems from Mr. Stephen Spender and Mr. William Plomer, which offer mature emotion and wit to the reader, and critical essays by Mr. Henry Green and Mr. Rex Warner, which deal with interesting literary matters, even if they stir one to very strong disagreement. Mr. Green offers up Doughty as a master of English prose, a supreme genius in the use of the English language, and backs his high claims with quotations which give the full Jacobethan flavour of *Arabia Deserta*. In the closing years of the nineteenth century the craftsmen employed by Messrs. Waring and Gillow produced copies of antique furniture which now pass as genuine sixteenth and seventeenth century pieces: it is difficult to rate Doughty's achievement any higher than this and tempting to place it alongside that of architects who succeed in designing council offices and hospitals in the idiom of the eighteenth century. After describing how Bedouin raiders were beaten off a pilgrim party by the Turkish escort with the use of Krupp field guns, Doughty ends a paragraph with, "The great Stamboul officer of the year was sore affrighted, so that he durst return no more by the land way, where he must see those sun-blackened faces again of the wild Beduw, but got him home upon shipboard." We are asked to look at an Elizabethan event but we know it is our time. Then gat they, for they would merrymake, with certain women new come upon the town, to Brighthelmstone upon the Southern Belle—this is obviously fake, and it is at least arguable that what is fake applied to East Sussex is fake applied to Arabia. Mr. Green's argument to the contrary, that Doughty's style is pure and a reflection of his integrity, is stimulating reading, whatever one's opinion. Mr. Warner advances ingenious, if perverse, arguments in favour of making letters parasitic upon the State, suggesting a subsidised literature freed from all vulgar commercial necessity. The argument is that it would reflect credit on Democracy if the State subsidised the production of the serious work which its rich citizens are too frivolous, and its masses either too indigent or too illiterate, to desire. A curious theory. The function of an intelligentsia is to provide intellectual leadership, and it seems at least dubious if it can fulfil the function by appearing before the public in the role of an able-bodied beggar. A whore recently wrote a book called *To Beg I am Ashamed*, and there is a lot to be said for that line. In his introduction Mr. Lehmann claims that the war is making writers write better than ever, but his other contributors give him no support at all. ANTHONY WEST

Immortal Portraits. Text by ALEX STRASSER. *Focal Press.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

Forty-eight photographs, mostly of the famous, illustrating the history of photography from its beginnings till 1914. The text includes much information about the development of the various processes, but the comments upon the sitters show no great knowledge of the nineteenth-century scene. Watts, for instance, was not a pre-Raphaelite. Octavius Hill's portraits remain the best, as they were almost the first, of photographs. Pierson's Napoleon III, Rejlander's Doré, Melandri's Sarah Bernhardt, Mrs. Cameron's Carlyle and Nadar's Delacroix alone would make this book worth possessing. A. L. Coburn's portrait of G. B. Shaw in 1902 is interesting for the uncanny likeness to another Anglo-Irishman, Mr. Gerald Heard.

GRAMOPHONE NOTES

BEETHOVEN: *Third Symphony in E flat* (Eroica). N.B.C. Orchestra, cond. Toscanini (H.M.V. DBS8904–10).

SZOSTAKOVICZ: *Piano Concerto*, op. 35. Eileen Joyce with Hallé Orch., cond. Leslie Heward (Col. DX8167–9).

GERSHWIN: *Rhapsody in Blue*. André Kostelanetz and His Orch., Alec. Templeton at Piano (Col. DX1045–6).

GRIEG: *Piano Concerto*. Benno Moiseiwitsch, with Hallé Orch., cond. Leslie Heward (H.M.V. C3264–7).

MOZART: *Adagio and Fugue in C minor*. (K456) Hallé Orch., cond. Leslie Heward (Col. DX1056).

MOZART: *Thamos, King of Egypt: Two Entractes*. Minneapolis Symphony Orch., cond. Dimitri Mitropoulos (Col. LX930).

MENDELSSOHN: *Hebrides Overture*. Hallé Orch., cond. Malcolm Sargent (Col. DX1053).

BAX: *String Quartet No. 1 in G*. Griller Quartet (Decca K1009–12).

HAYDN: *Trio No. 1 in G*. Eileen Joyce, Henry Holst, Anthony Pini (Col. DX1054–5).

RAVEL: *Tzigane*. Ida Haendel and Ivor Newton (Decca K1013).

RACHMANINOFF: *Prelude in B flat*, op. 23, No. 2, and

RACHMANINOFF: *Prelude in D minor*, op. 23, No. 3. Moura Lympany (Decca K1024).

BACH: *Prelude and Gavotte*. Watson Forbes (viola) and piano acc. (Decca M499).

"PUGNANI": *Praeludium and Allegro*. Yehudi Menuhin, acc. Marcel Gazelle (H.M.V. DA1490).

HAYDN: *The Creation*: "With Verdure Clad." Isobel Baillie, with Hallé Orch., cond. Leslie Heward (Col. DX1052).

ARNE: "*Where the Bee Sucks*," and

MORLEY: "*It was a Lover and his Lass*," and

TRAD.: "*Loch Lomond*." Elsie Suddaby, acc. Gerald Moore (Decca M510).

AFTER my rudeness about the Toscanini recording last month, it is both a surprise and a pleasure to me to be able to give an emphatic welcome to the new *Eroica* issue. There is still some tendency to overload the microphone and, owing to Toscanini's disdain for the exigencies of

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recording technique, the turn-overs are awkward and irritating—not to speak of long silences, stuffed with a variety of coughings, at the beginning of the movements. But these drawbacks do not prevent this set from putting all the others in the shade. One of the functions of a great conductor is to make us realise why Beethoven was so indubitably right to persist in preferring this symphony to the always more popular Fifth; and Toscanini does it. Beethoven's notebooks show at what pains he was to give the initial theme its most concentrated, expressive, and at the same time most malleable, form. The aim was a profound ferocity, and I for one have never heard this realised so thrillingly before; nor have I ever heard those titanic contrapuntal passages in the Funeral March sound so tremendous—as it were a relentless siege, from all sides at once, on the inmost citadel.

This month the concerto of the 20th century shows up rather badly as against that of the 19th. Being a dramatic form, it is apt to be taken advantage of. Szostakovicz has always seemed to me, in spite of his undeniable cleverness, rather a phoney composer. He is up to every kind of snuff, but I fancy he is really an academician in disguise—a conventional face with a false nose on it. Consider, for instance, the mixture of styles in this piano concerto. What is that paragraph from Mahler doing in the second movement? Why that E major trumpet passage in the Finale, unless it be merely to give the second soloist an extra bit of fun? Wherefore that perversely hideous G flat at the end of the first movement? However brilliant *montage* may be—and it is capable of high entertainment value—scissors and paste can never produce a genuine work of art. Still, this music, although profoundly superficial, is never boring, always clever, and sometimes pretty: in fact, it took me back to Poulenc and Auric, in the old Diaghilev days, round about 1926. The *Rhapsody in Blue* takes me back even further—but most unpleasantly. Almost as clever as the Szostakovicz, but far more bogus, this piece of effrontery tops my own list of the worst music composed in our time. Odiously vulgar, emphatic and pretentious, it has all that is least recommendable in Jewish art. With Grieg we come to something genuine, though not particularly clever; for if anything could be said to let down this delicious work it is the construction of it. I have always felt the two sections of the Finale to be too temperamentally incompatible to make a good marriage. Surely one should not—as I think one does—forget the second so entirely during the recapitulation? And again, the end must appear weak, because the second theme will not stand being pumped up with all that brass. Yet what a midsummer-night's dream the Adagio is, and how wonderfully poetical the first movement! This is a most acceptable set, for Moiseiwitsch, in spite of a slight tendency to be in front of the orchestra, walks through his part like Gerald du Maurier in a play specially written for him. The orchestra could hardly do its stuff better, nor the whole be more expertly recorded.

Those to whom my remarks on Mozart's fugues last month appealed as true, will certainly have thought at once of the great *C minor Adagio and Fugue* as a case in point. This represents the composer at his least rococo; ignore it at your peril. Many will continue to prefer the Busch Chamber Orchestra's recording, but the new one is fine, sumptuous and cheap at the price, though it seems to have been made in rather too lively a studio. The *Thamos Ballet*, on the other hand, is second-rate stuff on the whole, but worth reviving. Unfortunately, the recording is a very bad one (especially on side 2), full of pre-echo and poorly controlled forte.

Since the Beecham disc—an eagerly expected performance which turned out to be quite unremarkable—all sorts of people must have been longing for a satisfactory new recording of the *Hebrides Overture*. Here it is then, complete with the orchestral ground-swell one so often misses in this immortal poem.

The early *Quartet in G* is probably one of Bax's most generally liked compositions. A facile and most unequal composer, he is here far less rambling and complex than in his later work. This is delightfully melodious music, with lots of windows open on a wide landscape; but the deeply felt Lento is no doubt the high point of the whole thing. The chromaticism produces some ravishing sound-effects, but never cloys, because it is always underpinned by a single key and avoids the more hysterical modulating encouraged by *Parsifal* in the more uncritical of Wagner's disciples. The Finale is perhaps rather weak, for the same reasons as I have just urged against the corresponding movement of the Grieg Concerto. The Griller Quartet give an admirably understood performance and the recording pays full attention to the niceties of chamber music technique. This is especially noticeable in the soft passages, which never wobble or disappear. A most creditable affair to all concerned.

The Haydn Trios are intensely intimate works that yield little on a first hearing, but profit by being taken on trust. This is perhaps the best known work, but not the least attractive, of the set. The Holst ensemble is very happily composed and plays with a real sense of style; Mr. Pini being remarkable for his altruism.

For all its cleverness, Ravel's *Tzigane* seems to me his least successful pastiche. It contains about as much music as the notorious *Bolero*; but since it is equally "effective," violinists will no doubt continue to inflict it on us. Ida Haendel goes through all the hoops with astonishing aplomb, and Ivor Newton plays his (much too subservient) part well. The recording is above the average. The same qualities attend the new disc of "Pugnani's" *Praeludium and Allegro*—a famous piece the bogus nature of which has not, I feel, destroyed its charm and skill. Menuhin gives a perfect example of easy virtuosity.

One must respect Miss Lympany for making so good a shot at Rachmaninoff's B flat Prelude; but its thunderous rhetoric, curiously reminiscent of Strauss's "*Heimliche Aufforderung*," really requires a male fist. To my thinking the D minor Prelude is taken a good deal too slow, but sounds admirably limpid.

In the Bach Prelude and Gavotte Watson Forbes gives a remarkable exhibition of bowing—always a difficult feat on the viola, for this instrument is really too big for the human arm. A very tactful performance, slightly marred by a flumping bass, for which the recording balance is, I suspect, alone responsible.

"With Verdure Clad" makes one long for a complete recording of *The Creation*—and of *The Seasons*, too, for that matter. Go to it, Miss Baillie! This is the best of your records, so far.

Arne—Morley—"Traditional": this is, in the last analysis, the truest kind of English music, as fresh as a daisy—and so, is Miss Suddaby's voice.

EDWARD SACKVILLE WEST

Week-end Competitions

No. 622

Set by Audrey Hilton

The usual prizes are offered for the best original mnemonic verses of not more than 16 lines for use in 1942, upon such subjects as; the names of the Cabinet Ministers, the towns of Libya, the usage of a Tommy gun, clothes ration values, your local trains or telephone numbers. Competitors are free to choose their own subject or to use any of the above.

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RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Monday, January 12.

2. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 619

Set by Raymond Mortimer

The usual prizes are offered for a verse-translation of Gautier's *Noël :*

Le ciel est noir, la terre est blanche ;
Cloches, carillonnez gaiment !
Jésus est né ; la Vierge penche
Sur lui son visage charmant.

Pas de courtines festonnées
Pour préserver l'enfant du froid ;
Rien que les toiles d'araignées
Qui pendent des poutres du toit.

Il tremble sur la paille fraîche,
Ce cher petit enfant Jésus,
Et pour l'échauffer dans sa crèche
L'âne et le boeuf soufflent dessus.

La neige au chaume pend ses franges,
Mais sur le toit s'ouvre le Ciel,
Et, tout en blanc, le chœur des anges
Chante aux bergers : ' Noël ! Noël ! '

Report by Raymond Mortimer

"How difficult these simple things are" was the lament of several entrants, and I feel some remorse for having invited competitors to attempt the impossible. Any word added to provide a rhyme or fill a foot detracts, I have found, from the effect, yet such additions are inevitable, if the rhyming scheme is maintained. (Partly, I suspect, to circumvent this obstacle, several versions—the best of them by C. I. Simeonoff—were made in Scottish, in which dialect rhymes seem easier.) William Bliss "made the angels *gold* on purpose—I'm sure they'd have put on their best jewels for *that* occasion," but Gautier, the most visual of poets, composed his poem in a series of whites no less carefully than in his *Symphonie en blanc majeur*. A number of poets of school age sent in excellent translations, particularly Daphne Hymas, Marion Ebben, Mary Hill-Cottenham Kathleen Dumper and Betty H. Leadale. A version in the form of a negro spiritual was the ingenious work of William Henry Clark ; Leslie Johnson made his into an acrostic in fine seventeenth-century style, and Colin Gibson illuminated his verses with a most accomplished drawing. Over 250 entries, almost all meritorious, make the selection of the winners peculiarly difficult : Mrs. Cornford has written what seems to me the best poem, but I regret that her sky is "dark" instead of "black," and that her angels are not in white. For second prize I have hesitated between Sir Robert Witt, Damon, Ronald Mason, Towanbucket, Barbara Strachey, G. de Vavasour and Sgt. Charles Furbank. Other particularly good entries have come from A. G. Tilney, L. E. Gielgud, Namancos, P. V. Youle, Olric, Peter Boulton, M. K. Harris, P. B. Pitman, Ifor Hael, H. W. Thompson, Diana M. V. Guthrie, J. and M. Gwyer, France, Sandys Wason, W.T.W., Sylvia Mackay, Mrs. G. Hayes, Olwyn White, Betty E. G. Cox, Silvia Tatham, R. N. Higginbotham, Kate Winifred Simpson, L./Bdr. McKenzie, L./Bdr. L. Bennett, Guy Innes, E. M. Jameson, Nancy Gunter, V. Stewart, O. M. Allen, Philip J. Lamb, E. W. Fordham, Louise Haworth, Lionel Fox, Pat Hopkinson, Lieut. J. C. Leeney, Charlotte Urquhart, P. David Forsyth, M. Patricia Cox, Omega, G. J. P. and E. J. Lyness. I recommend that a first prize of one guinea go to Mrs. Cornford, and half-a-guinea each to Sgt. Charles Furbank, Barbara Strachey and G. de Vavasour.

FIRST PRIZE

NOEL

How white the earth, how dark the sky,
How merrily ring the bells on high,
As Mary bends her happy face
Above her baby's resting-place.

No heavy curtains looped with gold
To keep his body from the cold,
But on the rafters hanging thin
The dusty webs that spiders spin.

His little body there it lay
A-tremble on a bed of hay,
Until, to warm their Saviour dear,
The ox and ass came breathing near :

While drifts of snow the stable hide,
And heaven above is opened wide,
And shepherds hear the angels sing ;
Noël, Noël, for Christ the King.

FRANCES CORNFORD

SECOND PRIZE

I.—NOEL

The sky is black ; the earth is white ;
Ring out, bells, this joyful night !
Jesus is born : the Virgin bright
Bends her fair face over him.

There is no purple cloth nor gold
To keep the little child from cold,
But cobwebs on the rafters old—
Nothing more to cover him.

He trembles on his strawy bed,
But ox and ass within the shed
Breathe upon the infant's head,
And that shall warm him well.

With plaid of snow the barn's concealed,
But shepherds watching in the field
See above the heavens revealed,
While angels sing "Noël !"

G. DE VAVASOUR

II.—CHRISTMAS

The skies are black, the earth is white ;
Bells, peal your loudest with delight ;
Jesus is born ; the charming maid
Bends her sweet look where he is laid.

No curtains looped around the bed
Shield from the cold that infant head ;
Only the cobwebs, sheer and soft,
Hang from the rafters up aloft.

He shivers on the straw, fresh-piled,
Little Jesus, dearest child,
And to warm him in his cot
Ox and ass breathe sweet and hot.

The thatch with snow is garlanded,
But heaven opens overhead,
And white-clad angels, wing to wing,
"Noël, Noël" to shepherds sing.

BARBARA STRACHEY

III.—NOEL

Heaven is black and earth is white,
God's boy is being born !
The bells must be his band all night
And Mary watch till dawn.

He shivers on his palliasse,
Poor, excellent young man :
For warmth, the bullock and the ass,
Breathe near him when they can.

He has no quilt nor altar cloth
To huddle himself in,
He's only sour stable cloths,
And they are precious thin.

The thatching's rent where snow still clings,
The sky's cleared where it fell,
And angel above shepherd sings,
Noël ! Noël ! Noël !

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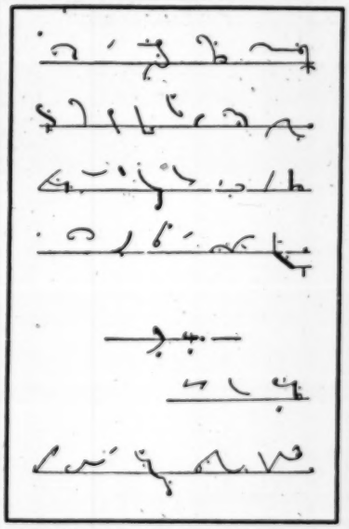

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WEEK-END OF MUSIC, Oxford. January 9th to 12th, 1942. Jacques String Orchestra, Menges Quartet, Pauline Juler, Kathleen Long, Eda Kersey, Thomas Armstrong, etc. Accommodation and five concerts—3 *guineas* (inc. tax). Tickets and full particulars from MISS D. ERHART, Little Gaddesden (Tel. 2126), Berkhamsted.

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Lectures, Meetings & Exhibitions

ETHICAL CHURCH, Queensway, W.2. January 4th, at 11.30, H. J. BLACKHAM: "Sin, Relative and Absolute."

REBUILDING Britain: The Town and Country Planning Association announces a series of fortnightly lunch-time meetings. First meeting Jan. 8th, 1942, at Dickins and Jones, Oxford Circus, W.1. Snack lunch 2s. 6d., at 12.45. Meeting 1.20. Speaker: MR. GEORGE HICKS, M.P. Further particulars from the Secretary, Town and Country Planning Association, 13 Suffolk Street, S.W.1. WHI. 2881.

"TOWARDS A NEW WORLD." Series of Public Lunch-Hour Addresses, Friends House, Euston Road, N.W.1. Tues., 1.20–2 p.m. Speakers will include: January 13th: Stephen J. Thorne, John W. Cadbury, Jean M. Thompson, Edith M. Pye, Elizabeth Fox Howard, Liba Ambrosova, Marie Luise Molf, Gilbert Murray, José Castillejo, Carl Heath.

INTERNATIONAL Arts Centre, 22 St. Petersburgh Place, W.2. Future lectures and recitals by Robert Speaight (Jan. 2nd), Maurice Cole (Jan. 6th), L. A. G. Strong, Eric Newton, Leonard Hirsch, R. L. Megroz, Donald Wolfit, Jan van der Gucht, etc. Particulars from Secretary. Bay. 5194.

SETTLE With India Now. Meeting Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1. Thursday, January 8th, 6.30 p.m. Speakers: A. Bevan, M.P., W. G. Cove, M.P., R. W. Dobbie, M.P., William Mellor, M.P., A. Sloan, M.P. Krishna Menon. Chair: R. Sorensen, M.P., India League, 165 Strand, W.C.2.

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"PLANNING the Post-War World." London Labour Party Lecture, at Essex Hall, Essex Street, Strand, W.C.2. G. D. H. COLE, M.A., on "Back to Work: Demobilisation and the Re-employment of Labour," Saturday, Jan. 10th, 1942, at 2.30 p.m. Admission Free. Reserved seat tickets 6d. from 258/262 Westminster Bridge Road, S.E.1.

DEBATE. Which Party should working-class support? I.L.P. (F. A. Ridley), Socialist Party, G.B. (C. Groves). Chairman: John McNair. Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, 6.0 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 11th. Admission free.

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1. Sunday Meetings, 11 a.m. Jan. 4. PROFESSOR J. C. FLUGEL, D.Sc.: "Wishful Thinking: Its Use and Abuse."

LANGFORD Grove Christmas Pictures are on sale at The Challenge, S.P.C.K. House, 9 Northumberland Avenue, W.C.2. Half proceeds to go to Aid to Russia Fund.

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Further particulars and Application Forms (to be returned by January 10th, 1942) from the Secretary, County Youth Committee, County Buildings, Shrewsbury.

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December, 1941.
County Buildings, Shrewsbury.

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THE UNITED NATIONS PLAN

Mr. Churchill and the President are training the "united nations" to take long perspectives. The speech at Ottawa and the message to Congress both reflected the plan and time-table worked out at Washington with any modifications that may have come from the simultaneous talks between Stalin and Mr. Eden. Mr. Churchill distinguished three phases of the war, of which the two latter seemed to coincide with Mr. Roosevelt's forecasts for 1942 and 1943. Modern warfare is so much a matter of mechanism that it is possible within certain limits to reduce it to arithmetical reckoning. Machines breed their kind in a calculable ratio. Mr. Roosevelt was deliberately indiscreet and published his huge figures as much to terrify the enemy as to hearten us and our friends. Even more striking was the statement that the Republic, which has hitherto spent only 15 per cent. of her vast national income on defence, will this year spend on it over 50 per cent. Mr. Roosevelt made it clear that American forces will be used in all continents, and even in Great Britain as a base.

If anything could upset this time-table it would be the continued success of the Red Army. Its most cheering performances are in the Crimea. The Black Sea Fleet has there carried out yet another successful landing operation, near Eupatoria, to the north-west of Sevastopol. With the will to do it, this sort of operation, which our own experts find so daunting in its difficulty, can succeed. The immediate task set to the forces based on Eupatoria, Feodosia and Kerch is to raise the siege of Sevastopol and drive the Germans out of the Crimea. The pace is quick, but one must remember that the Crimea, which on our little skeleton maps looks rather like the Isle of Wight, is in fact 200 miles broad. But this would be only the first stage of a much more ambitious turning operation. If the Russian Crimean army could then cross the Perekop Isthmus, while Timoshenko's men struck again between Taganrog and Mariupol, they might between them out-flank the entire Ukrainian section of the German Front and roll it up. At the lowest estimate this threat, even if it falls short of full success, is bound to alarm the German Command and upset its plans for a sedentary defence throughout the winter. Simultaneously the Red Army's counter-offensives in the centre are also going well, though the enemy, in spite of his suffering in the intense cold, is still resisting with great determination. The plan is to drive two wedges into the German line, north and south of Mojaisk. Local successes have been scored also round Leningrad. The Russians in all these operations seem to be using fresh armies, while the output of the Russian defence industries is now reaching its peak. Only in tanks is the shortage still a handicap. All this may warrant the hope that the Russians will be able to withstand the renewed attack which the Germans are no doubt planning.

How far, and if so where, shall we then be able to help them by a diversion on another front? The inferences to be drawn from the Ottawa speech are not on this subject encouraging. The only chance would seem to lie in a campaign developing out of the Libyan operations. These have for the moment come to a halt. Bardia has been retaken with 7,000 prisoners, and the chances of capturing Sollum and Helfaya, with about the same number of defenders, are good. That will ease our communications and complete the subjugation of Cyrenaica. But Rommel's main force is still intact at Jedabia, and it seems clear that fresh tanks have reached it from the West. This must mean that under German direction the Italians, doubtless with many losses, can still get through our blockade. From the Pacific there is no new tendency in the sombre news, nor must we expect any for a considerable time. It is satisfactory that all arms are now, in each area, under a single command. Thus General Wavell in the Western region has under him the American Admiral Hart. The few American warships in Philippine waters have made good their escape, which means that the heavily outnumbered land forces left behind can offer little more than a guerilla resistance. In Malaya the British continue to fall back towards Singapore. Very belatedly the sahibs who govern its mainly Chinese population have begun to co-operate with the Kuo-min-tang, our ally's ruling party. While the Japs got at Penang one of the world's two chief tin smelters, intact with a fleet of small ships, it is said that the abandoned mines round Ipoh are being flooded. The Chinese, meanwhile, have scored a success at Changsha, which enables them still to deny to the Japs the use of the Canton-Hankow railway.

In spite of these events in the Pacific area, the military perspective disclosed in the Churchill-Roosevelt pronouncements is more encouraging. The most disturbing feature of them was the passage towards the end of the Ottawa speech in which Mr. Churchill seemed to rely mainly, but not exclusively, on bombing to crush Germany in 1943. The suggestion is still that she can be reduced to ruins from the air; that done, it is conceded that a land force will be needed to occupy the *débris*. The much higher rate of acceleration disclosed by Mr. Roosevelt in the production of planes than is contemplated for tanks, bears out this interpretation. This strategy seems to us to rest on an estimate of what aerial bombardment can effect, which is now out of date. The defence is overtaking the attack: driven up into the stratosphere the bomber cannot aim accurately. The Nazis made little attempt to destroy Moscow from the air, and what little they did try failed. In time our High Command may also change its plans. But meanwhile is it not making the wrong kind of planes—many heavy bombers but few "stukas," and too few fighters with guns of a calibre that can deal with tanks? A rather more intimate contact between our soldiers and the Russians might help them to bring their strategy up to date.